

Notas Y Más

May 2019

Brief news items on upcoming community events.

Send items for Notas y Más to: lavoz@esperanzacenter.org or mail to: 922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212.

The deadline is the 8th of each month.

The *Mission Marquee Plaza Farmers & Artisan Market* provides live music performances, food trucks, fun family activities and more! The markets are brought to you by the **City of San Antonio World Heritage Office** and the **Mission Marquee Plaza**, 3100 Roosevelt Ave. The next scheduled dates are: **Saturdays, May 18th & Jun 15th from 10am-12pm**. Check: events.getcreativesanantonio.com



San Antonio's Literary Arts Center, offers *Meditations on the Mind and Mouth: Jazz and Poetry with a Purpose*, featuring **Andrea "Vocab" Sanderson** on **Thursday, May 30th** at *Carmen's de la Calle*, 320 N. Flores St. Tickets are \$7 advance/\$10 at the door. Doors open at 7:30pm and the reading begins at **8pm**. For a schedule see: geminink.org

The *2019 Cambio Conference* will be held in Columbia, MO, from **June 5-7**. The annual multistate conference is in its 18th year. People who work with Latinos and immigrant communities convene to share research and best practices facilitating the integration of newcomers into communities throughout the U.S. See: cambioconference.wordpress.com/ or www.cambiodecolores.org

Join an *Alternatives to Violence Project* workshop, where you can learn and practice creative conflict resolution. The workshop will be held on **Friday June 7** in the evening, and all day **Saturday and Sunday the 8th and 9th** at **Presentation Ministry Center**, 2003 Ruiz. Sponsored by **Friends Meeting of San Antonio** and the **Poor People's Campaign**. Fee for registration is \$75 with sliding scale fee available. Call 210-495-5669 or email: margaritamcauliff@gmail.com

The nation's first and longest running Latino film festival returns this summer with the 41st edition of *CineFestival, Frontera in Focus* presented by the **Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center**. The annual celebration of independent Latino cinema takes place **July 11-14, 2019** at the *Guadalupe Theater*. See www.guadalupeculturalarts.org/cinefestival

To become part of the *El Placazo* Newspaper Program as a youth staff member, a writing, photography or layout/design mentor, or a general volunteer, contact **San Anto Cultural Arts** at 226-7466 or elplacazo@sananto.org.

A reminder! *HEB Free Tuesdays* at the **San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA)**, 200 W. Jones Ave. are ongoing weekly from **4-9pm on Tuesdays** to encourage families to visit the museum's exhibits free! See: samuseum.org/ for more.

Nickie Valdez, A 2019 Peace Laureate

Editor's note: Nickie Valdez of Dignity San Antonio, Rebecca Flores of the United Farm Workers and Patricia Castillo of P.E.A.C.E. Initiative were chosen in 2019 as San Antonio's Peace Laureates. Deb Myers was asked to share with Voz readers the introduction that she wrote about one of the honorees, Nickie Valdez.

I'm supposed to tell you a story about Nickie that has inspired me. That's a very difficult task since we've been together for 33 years! So, I will tell you the threads of her story that have inspired me. It's her courage and perseverance... characteristics that run deep in her from her childhood. She learned them hard and fast: As a young child she was abandoned by her mother, when she professed religious life she was turned away on a technicality and when she came out, her father rejected her. So, a story...

Once upon a time, in a very different San Antonio, when LGBTQI people didn't have last names or changed their names for fear of retaliation from work, family or friends—Nickie had the courage to come out publicly. She was one of the first to do so in San Antonio. She had the courage to be who she was, to believe in her goodness and came to recognize that she was a child of the universe and that she belonged!

Since then she has been steadfast and committed to creating the same thing for others. She has been an advocate of and for the community. As she likes to say...our work is to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. Throughout her work



Nickie Valdez(L) and Deb Meyers

with *Dignity* and the larger community... her perseverance and courage are strong threads in her story. A few samples:

She sat on the steps of the Catholic Student Center at San Antonio College with Fr. Alex Nagy, Sunday after Sunday, until people came. When the *Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith* of the Catholic Church declared us intrinsically disordered and morally evil, many gave up on the Catholic Church and *Dignity*—and gave Nickie a hard time for staying. She continued to believe that faith and spirituality are stronger than doctrine.

When the larger LGBT community in San Antonio was in turmoil over major issues, her strong desire was to bring people together. When being inclusive of women in liturgy was challenged, she led the way and held strong that God is neither male nor female. God is greater than anything we can imagine. When Bishop Cantú kicked us out of our home at St. Ann's Catholic Church—Nickie helped to make our home in a new place, claiming our spirituality comes from within—not in a building.

She has beaten cancer once and she is giving her 6-year struggle with Multiple Myeloma a run for its money. But her most important work is the people she has helped along the way. She has created a space for us to reconcile our spirituality with our sexuality, providing healing and wholeness to countless LGBTQI people. She inspired me 33 years ago and still inspires me today, to do the same! Thank you Nickie for your courage and perseverance... I love you.