



La Voz de Esperanza

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La Voz Mail Collective

The Collective is sheltering at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic but will be returning when their health and safety can be assured. Extra funds are being raised to pay for folding La Voz each month during this time.

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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.

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 Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.



The year is 2020. Unforgettable and, at the same time, one year we would rather forget. The year has been distinguished by three things: the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) that has tragically changed our lives (perhaps, forever) beginning in March of 2020; the shooting of George Floyd in May caught on video that undeniably demonstrated the cruelty of police and the need for reform; and finally, the upcoming 2020 presidential elections that are embroiled in a state by state effort to block or suppress voting making it as difficult as possible for anyone to exercise their right to vote.

Besides these three distinguishing characteristics of 2020, we've also experienced the passing of a champion of human rights in the person of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who, still warm in her grave, is hastily being replaced on the Supreme Court while voters are literally lining up to vote and are mailing in their ballots if they can navigate all of the rules for voting in their state. Everything is a mess!

La Katrina has her hands full this year. With 8,021,057 Coronavirus cases in the U.S. and about 220,000 deaths in this nation, alone, we lead the world in COVID-19 deaths. And still, we have no assurances of financial aid to families and small businesses in the U.S. before the election on November 3rd. Aside from the pandemic, the Black Lives Matter Movement continues to press issues of police reform and community services with continuing protests, demonstrations and political action.

This November 2020 issue La Voz de Esperanza is, therefore, dedicated to victims of COVID-19 with our heartfelt sympathies and prayers to all of the Buena gente, friends and allies of the Esperanza who have lost family or friends or suffered from the pandemic. And, we also dedicate the issue to families who have lost someone to police violence. Such violence for people of color is not new as it extends back into the 15th century, but continuing to expose it as we are now will lead to the justice we all deserve as human beings.

I wanted to "say their names"—those that have died at the hands of law enforcement in this issue of La Voz de Esperanza, but it was hard to find a list of names and it continues to grow. However, Renée Ater, a public scholar and historian, began a personal blogpost on May 29, 2020, just four days after the murder of George Floyd with the intention of paying tribute to him by posting his name and life dates, but soon she realized she needed to do much more leading to a list that we have included in this issue of La Voz. I remembered one of my favorite art pieces by Ravi Zupa that clearly illustrated calavera police beating a victim so I added that to her list. Learn more about Ater at: www.reneateater.com

My heartfelt thanks go out to all who wrote calaveras this year. These poems, many written in Spanish, as is traditional, satirize the political climate and characters of today without mercy! Rachel Jennings, one of the calaverists, has made it her mission to bring the genre to English-speaking audiences in recent years and deservedly garnered her own page of calaveras. Enrique Sánchez, now 92-years-old, also has his own page and moniker, Don Calaveras, after writing calaveras for La Voz since we started in November of 1999.

Gracias, also, for the Literary Ofrendas honoring those that have passed and for the poems of the season observing time passing. This issue is a community effort and we owe you, Buena Gente, a debt of gratitude.

Finally, last but not least, do not forget to exercise your right to vote on November 3rd if you haven't already done so by mail or early voting. Best of health to all.

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



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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.