



La Voz de Esperanza

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La Voz Mail Collective

...is sheltering at home due to COVID-19 but will return when it is safe. Extra funds are being raised to pay for the folding of La Voz.

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 Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.



Lerma's Grand Opening

The heart of conjunto music was alive in **Lerma's Nite Club** for more than 60 years before it closed in 2010 facing the threat of demolition. Through the efforts of individuals, community groups like the *Westside Development Corporation*, grants, pro bono services and a hard push by the *Save Lerma's Coalition*—**Lerma's** was saved and has now been restored. After the group joined a national movement to save historic buildings, *This Place Matters*,

Lerma's earned a spot on the *National Register of Historic Places* in 2011 and in 2015, was voted Texas' *Most Endangered Landmark*. In 2016 The City of San Antonio awarded the **Esperanza Peace & Justice Center** funds to restore the building with Bexar County following suit with matching funds. A groundbreaking ceremony on July 15, 2019 included the presence of the mayor, activists, musicians, artists, politicians and conjunto aficionados. Little by little **Lerma's** is being revived as each of the 5 sections opens up in the community cultural arts center that now serves the Westside of San Antonio. La música de conjunto is embedded in the restored turquoise Lerma's building at 1602 N. Zarzamora St. and, fittingly, the first occupants of **Lerma's** are the *Conjunto Heritage Taller*, dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of traditional Conjunto music. Soon, the other four sections will also be occupied with entities that will serve the Westside community. Join us as we celebrate the grand opening of **Lerma's**

on Sunday, July 23rd from 3-5pm with conjunto music, speakers, food and drink as we look to the future when **Lerma's** will be a fully functioning community cultural arts center.

In this issue of

La Voz de Esperanza we also celebrate and laud the first graduating class of the *Escuelita de Paz y Justicia*, a great collaborative effort with the **Esperanza Peace and Justice Center** and UTSA's *Democratizing Racial Justice* project that was funded by the **Mellon Foundation's Just Futures Initiative**. ¡Felicidades y Adelante—onto the 2nd year!

—Gloria A. Ramírez, editor of *La Voz*



At left: Community members celebrate funding for Lerma's by Bexar County. Below: Beatriz Llamas and Blanca Rodríguez of *Las Tesoros* at the groundbreaking ceremony on July 15, 2019. Sadly, Beatriz passed away this summer. Blanca, the last surviving member of *Las Tesoros*, will perform at the Grand Opening on July 23rd.



Above: The original Lerma's Nite Club and accompanying sections before the restoration process began in 2019.

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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.