



Lupe Anguiano
Message to La Raza Unida Party Reunion
40th Anniversary of our 1972 Convention in
El Paso, Texas

August 30, 2012

Saludo a todos y un gran abrazo!

I treasure, with respect and gratitude, memories of my participation, helping to build La Raza Unida Party (RUP) in the United States. Like all of you, working for political control of our lives and freedom for our people and communities is a responsibility that only we, as Chicanos/as, can accomplish.

The September 1st to 4th 1972 - Raza Unida Party Convention in El Paso was, in my view a historical landmark, resulting in our winning 5% of the Texas vote. I vividly remember delivering the votes that elected Jose Angel Gutierrez, Chairman of our Raza Unida Party. The vote almost cost my life, but I know I would do it again; primarily, because Jose Angel showed tangible leadership results; the political experience of building a City – governed by Chicanos/as for the well-being of all people living in Crystal City, Texas.

For me, the goal and ideals of La Raza Unida Party, were and continue to be, about building Cities throughout the United States - Modeled after Crystal City, Texas. I have not tired of bringing this message to places where I live and work; in California, my home State; Washington DC; New York City; Silver Springs, Maryland; Mexico City; and San Antonio, Texas, where I lived for 18 years.

I was glad to share some of my Raza Unida doings and happenings, in an interview with Miguel Juarez. I also shared – action items that have been lost or missed in writings about my involvement in the Chicano/a liberation movement. Some of these include:

- March 3, 1967 – I was a President Johnson appointee from CA. I worked in DC - was honored to help Dr. Bruce Grader, an international Linguist, design the Bilingual Education Bill. Sad to say Bilingual Education was/has failed to be implemented as Spanish, English and other language program throughout the US – long story. Dr. Elizabeth Ott from the University of Texas turned the approved legislation into an ESL program. I resigned and went to work with Cesar Chavez.
- January 18, 1971 – I was urged to return to Washington DC – by Stan Pottenger, head of the Civil Rights Office for Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). I reviewed the Beeville, Texas School District and saw first hand discrimination at its core.
- That same year - October 12, 1971, The US House of Rep. passed the “Equal Right Amendment” (ERA) equality for Women – later adopted by the Senate. I enjoyed being in Washington DC - in the midst of strong women, and men supporters, rallying for the long overdue, equality for all women.
- My boss, Mr. Pottenger was a strong supporter of the ERA and also a good friend of Gloria Steinem. He assigned me to work with a team of Women to develop the “Blue Print” for American Women in Health, Education and Welfare. I selected Welfare Reform as my priority program study. The report was published in 1972

- as Women's Action Program. I called a team of Chicanas to DC but their input was not included in the report.
- During my spare time, in 1971 – I became an ERA volunteer, throughout the DC area (which includes Maryland and Virginia). I was invited by Gloria Steinem (most likely, recommended by Mr. Pottinger) to help develop the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC). I proposed and won approval to have "La Raza Unida Party" as a Caucus within NWPC. Chicanas were already leaders in LRUP – thus I felt this was a logical thing to do – since I was a member of LRUP.
- I enlisted DC, Maryland and Virginia Chicanos to join LRUP and went to the El Paso September, 1972 Convention with proxy votes. Conflict developed at the Convention when I opposed several outside political parties who were trying to impose their ideals on Raza Unida Party.

Moved to San Antonio, Texas:

I moved from Washington DC to San Antonio, Texas - April, 1973 to work as the Executive Director of the Southwest Regional Office for the Spanish Speaking – for the National Council of Catholic Bishops. Bishop Flores, from San Antonio invited me. I took a \$10,000 cut in pay. I accepted the position because I wanted to work on reforming Welfare – as it affects Women Head of Household (in accordance with the Research I did) and also because I wanted to continue working in La Raza Unida Party activities.

As head of the NWPC – La Raza Unida Caucus - I worked very hard to win the NWPC endorsement for Ramsey Muniz, RUP Candidate for Governor of Texas - at one of our NWPC Conventions. Sissy Farenthold was also running for the same position, she won the endorsement. I decided to become an Advisor to NWPC and turned over the NWPC Chicana Caucus to Rhea Mojica Hammer, who as you know is a politically smart and experienced woman who ran for US Congress in Chicago.

I enjoyed being the campaign manager for Danny Meza, Raza Unida candidate in San Antonio. I am Godmother to his and Choco (his wife) Meza's son Danny Meza JR. As you know Choco (Socorro) Meza is Democratic Chair of the Bexar County. We also worked with Cidro Rodriguez who is now a US Texas Congressman.

Mexico City:

Another of my memorable RUP happenings was being invited, along with five other RUP Mujeres - by the President of Mexico, as a Delegate to the 1975 First United Nations Women's Conference in Mexico City. Jose Angel obtained this invitation for us – made all the arrangements etc. I had the honor of writing the message – approved by the La Raza Unida Mujer Delegates. I remember Jose Angel had the message printed in a lovely brown paper booklet. I wrote a report about this historic Conference. The report has been published in several magazines and periodicals (La Raza Magazine; Caracol; De Colores Journal from New Mexico; Feminist Speeches and Comunidad, a Newsletter for the Southwest Regional Office for the Spanish Speaking – sponsored by the United States National Council of Catholic Bishops and finally also printed in some Mexico City Magazines – I believe Duke University has copies of these. Finally, Miguel has a copy of some of these publications to share with you.

Current Raza Doings:

The past seven years I have focused in working for - Clean Air and Water – also sustainable energy and overall healthy environment projects" via Stewards of the Earth – take a look www.stewards-earth.org – I am able to cover major environmental issues by collaborating with local, State and National groups.

I am a California “Non-Partisan Voter.” Currently active with a "Latino Issues Form" lead by a group of Latino organizations, community leaders who are actively working to change political representation in Congress, also California State House and Senate and also our local Oxnard City Council. I was involved in the re-districting process effecting Ventura County. Oxnard area candidates, whom I supported, did not win. Sad to say, the Democratic Party controls our areas political process and elected Latinos continue to support candidates who, offer us “Atole con el Dedo.” Republicans are worse – but the issue for me is, electing people from our City – whom we could hold accountable.

The good news is that some young Chicanos, in Oxnard and Ventura County, are working for political representation. I am 83 years and continue to help when able – most of the time I feel like I am “A Voice in the Wilderness.”

LULAC has succeeded in making changes in elected Schools Districts (almost 50% Latinos drop-out). Strong LULAC leaders are working very hard, improving education. The Latino Issues Forum continue meeting, mobilizing our people in key Latino neglected areas - Santa Paula, Fillmore and Piru and Oxnard.

Sorry, I am not able to join you for this memorable 40th Anniversary Celebration. I am with you in Spirit. Praying for Blessings for all!

Please keep me in your prayers!

Lupe

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