SAGA OF THE SANTA FE RAILROAD MEXICAN VILLAGE IN FORT MADISON, IOWA

Part II: Life in the Mexican Village



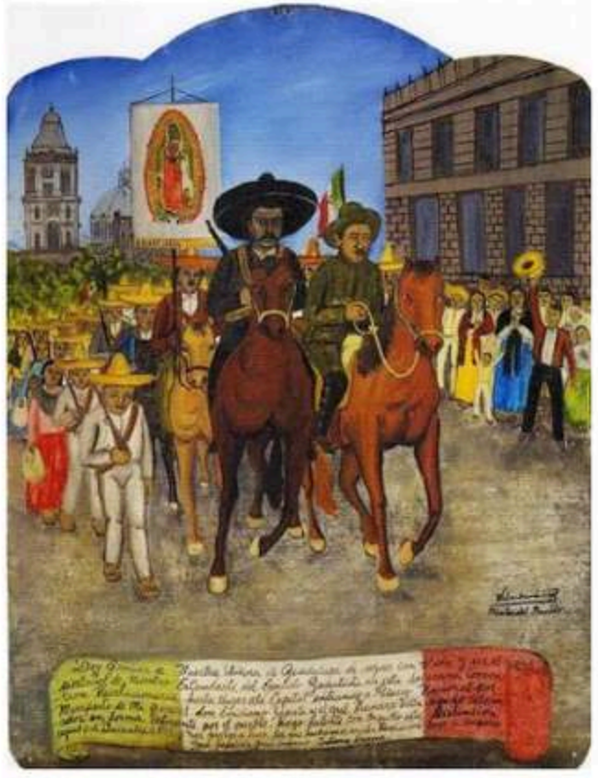
The migration from Mexico to Fort Madison included Our Lady of Guadalupe. In Fort Madison where immigrants from Mexico were marginalized, excluded, and housed in segregated work camps along the tracks, they had faith that *La Guadalupana* would protect them.





Our Lady of Guadalupe was venerated as a powerful protector for the immigrants from Mexico. The historical context of Our Lady of Guadalupe is deeply associated with oppressed Mexicans standing up to repressive systems. She was on the banner that was carried during the Mexican Revolution, during the Mexican War of Independence in 1810, Emiliano Zapata's rebel army during the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), and the Cristero Rebellion (1926-1929).



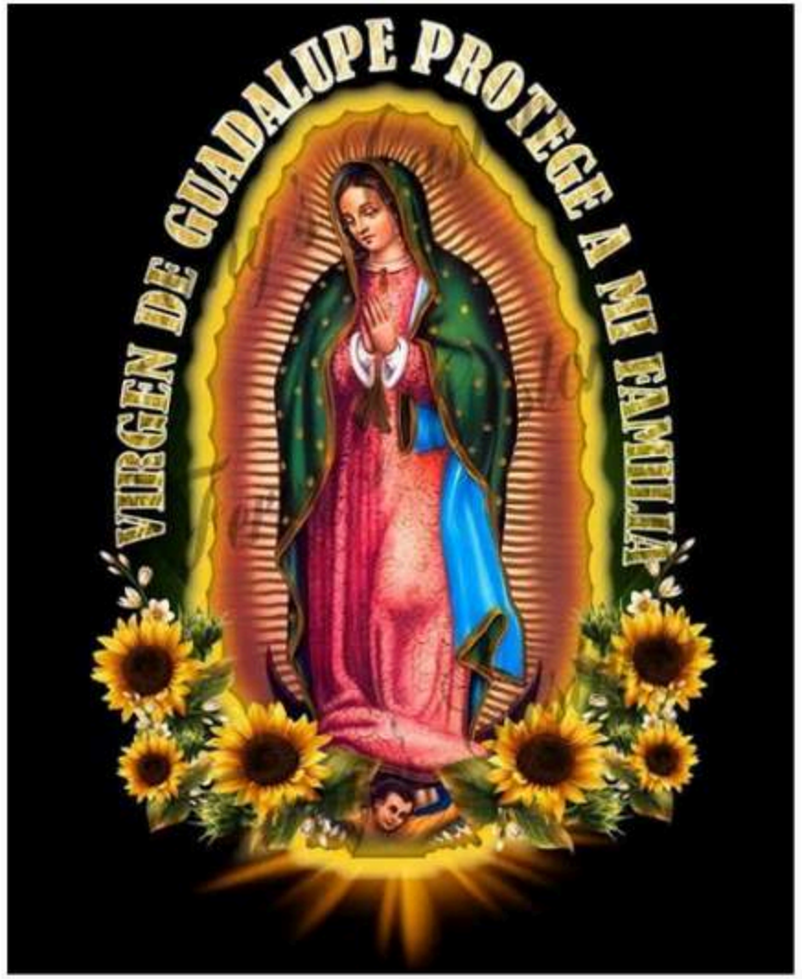




La Guadalupana was a piece of Mexico they could carry with them. She was not merely a religious figure; she was the ultimate symbol of *Mexicanidad:* Mexican identity. Our Lady of Guadalupe and hope was all they had.



Working for railways for the railroad companies such as the Santa Fe was extremely dangerous. Workers experienced extreme weather, train-related accidents, and disease outbreaks in confined, unsanitary living conditions located in toxic railroad yards.



A Guadalupana organization was established in Fort Madison.

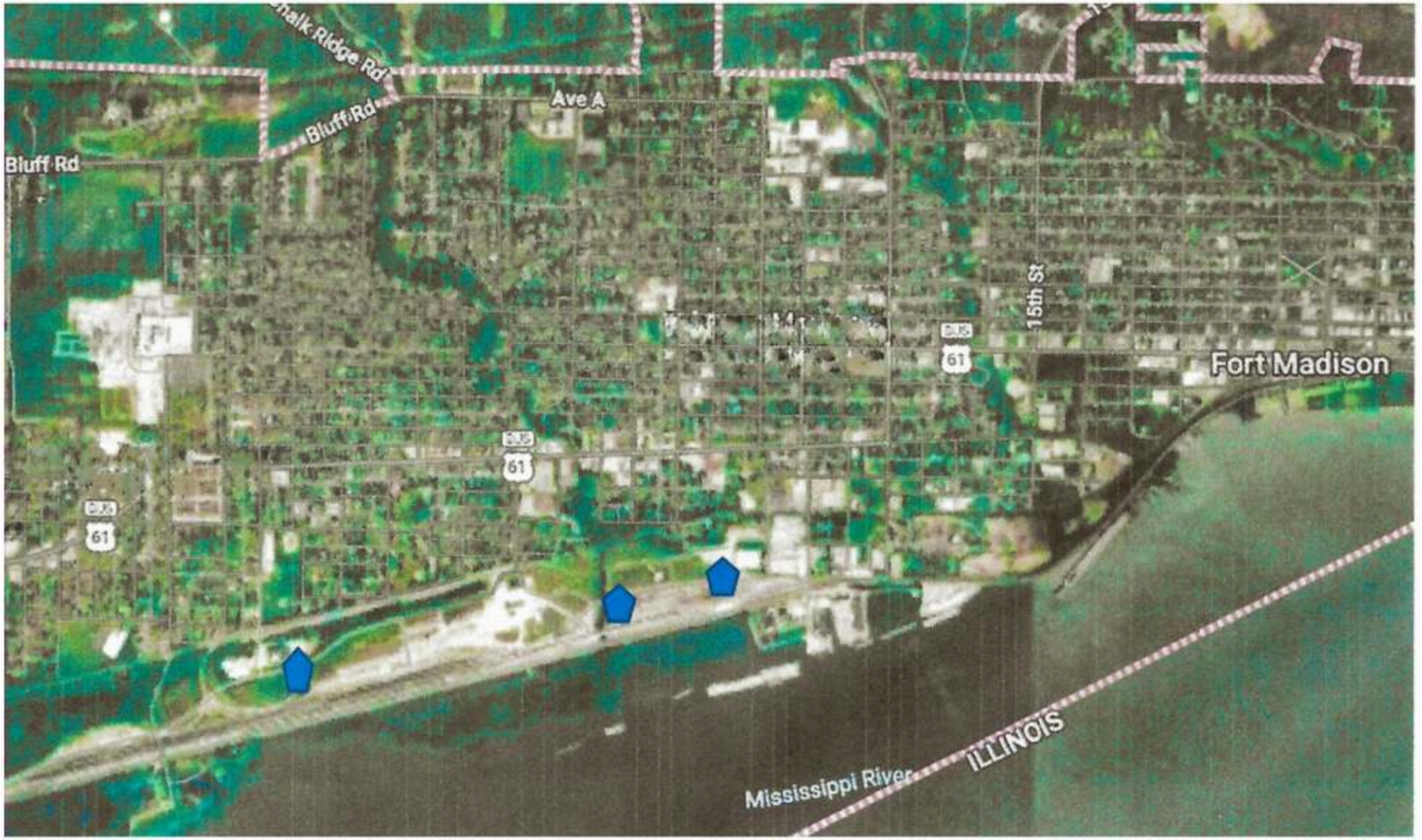
- It created spiritual devotion and Mexican cultural preservation to the Virgin Mary under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- Members were the organizers of the annual Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12.
- Our Lady of Guadalupe created a cultural anchor to preserve the Spanish language, distinct religious traditions, and cultural identity within predominately Anglo-American catholic parishes.

Fort Madison Guadalupana organization. It was the Mexican women members who devoted themselves to preserve and actively participated to maintain Mexican religious traditions, and to ensure their children had the same veneration for Our Lady of Guadalupe.

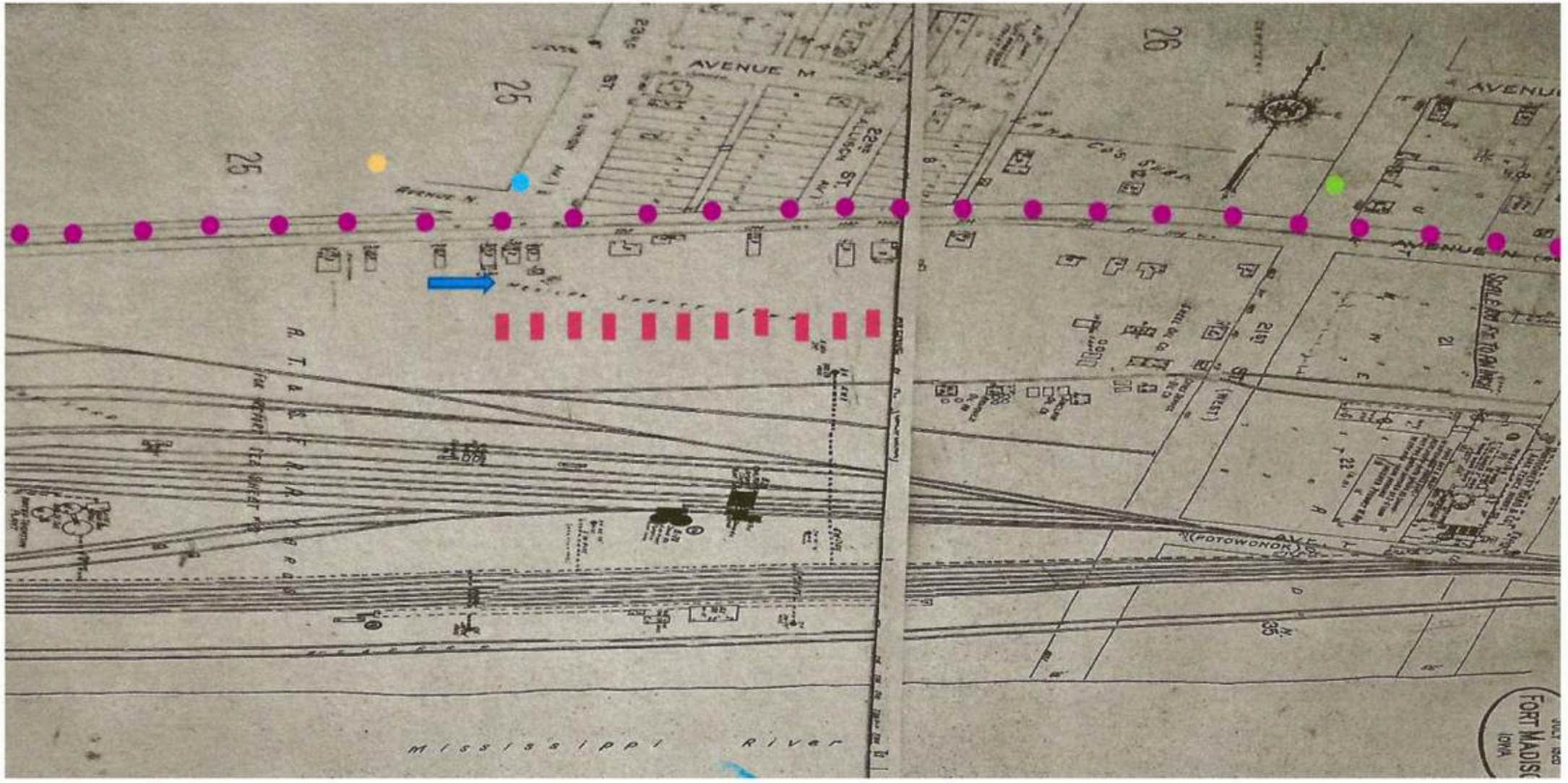




REVIEW FROM LAST LECTURE: First Mexican Santa Fe railroad camps and compound in Fort Madison: *La Yarda* (right), *El Cometa* (center), and *Istafiate* (left).



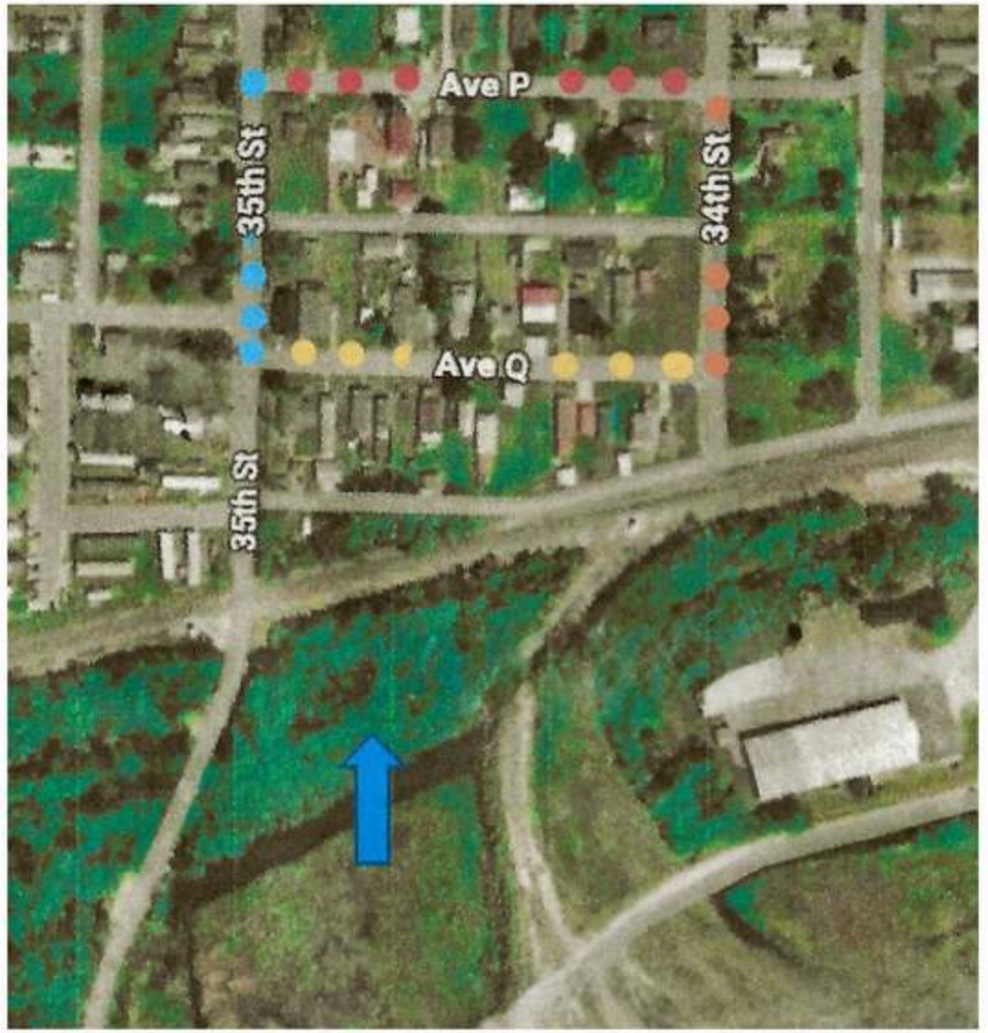
1926 map of Santa Fe *La Yarda"* noted as Mexican shanty town on the map



Santa Fe *Istafiate* Mexican housing compound built during 1921-1922.



“Mexican Village” between 35th and 16th Streets, Avenue P and Avenue Q. *Istafiate.*

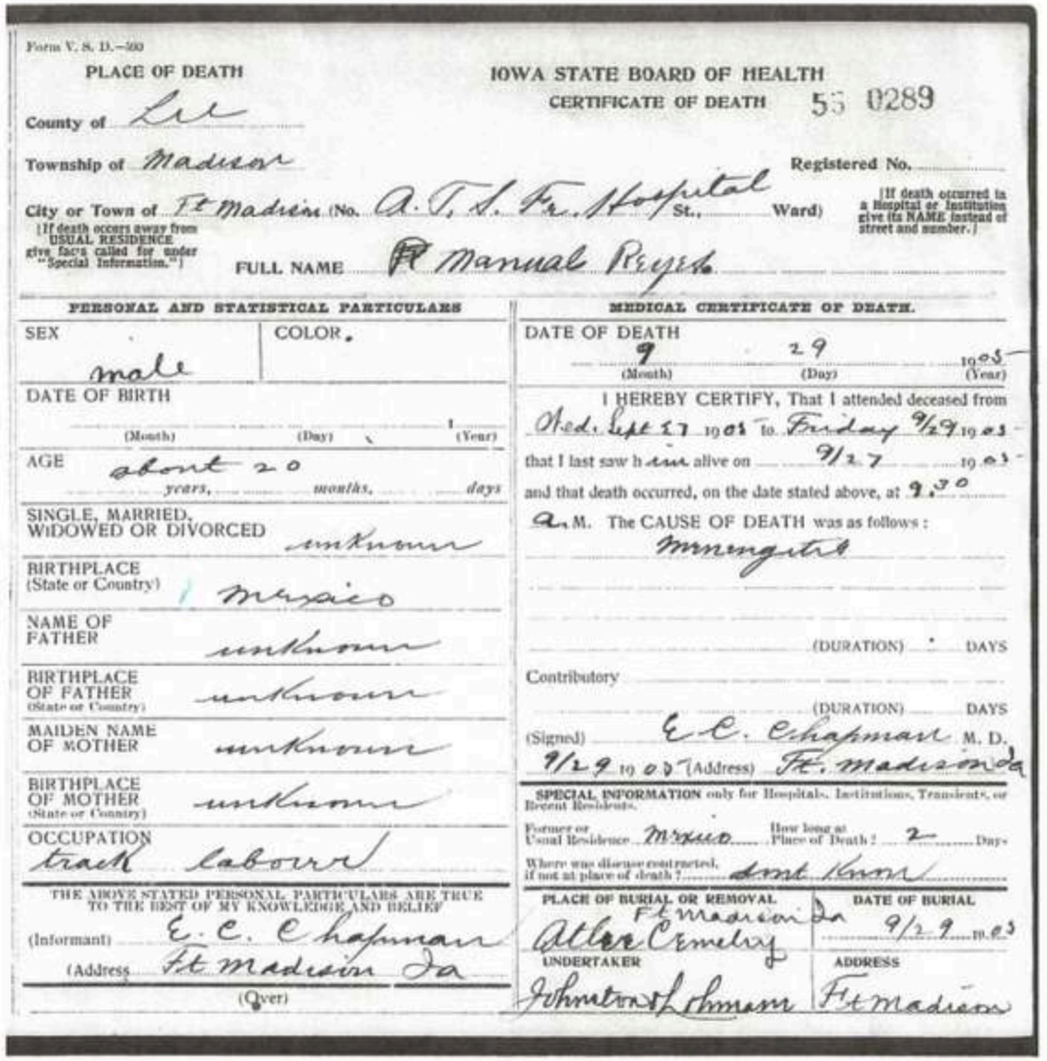


Hansman: Crowded confinements, substandard bunk cars at the Santa Fe yard, worked in all weather, dangerous and toxic environment, tense relationships, fights, excessive drinking, violence, and crime in first 10-15 years Mexican settlement.

John Hansman *(A Fort Madison Chronicle with Aspects of North Lee County)*: "...most local Mexicans, who were employed as laborers, had little choice but to live in close and crowded confinement of substandard bunk cars at the Santa Fe yards... their work, which in the earliest years consisted of mostly of employment on track expansion and track maintenance gangs, was exhaustive and carried out in the open in all weather. These conditions created an unsettling, often tense relationship in the Hispanic community, especially during the years 1906 and 1920. Under such circumstances, quarrels, excessive drinking, and occasional violence affrays invariably occurred."

Their work on section gangs was also very dangerous.

1905: First information about life and death in Fort Madison. Manuel Reyes* (“about 20”) listed as track laborer worker died of meningitis. **Unknown



Form V. S. D.—500

PLACE OF DEATH

IOWA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH 53 0289

County of Lee

Township of Madison

Registered No.

City or Town of Ft Madison (No. A. T. S. Fe. Hospital St., Ward)

[If death occurred in a Hospital or Institution give its NAME instead of street and number.]

[If death occurs away from USUAL RESIDENCE give facts called for under "Special Information."]

FULL NAME Ft Manual Reyes

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

SEX: male

COLOR:

DATE OF BIRTH: (Month) (Day) (Year)

AGE: about 20 years, months, days

SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED: unknown

BIRTHPLACE (State or Country): Mexico

NAME OF FATHER: unknown

BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or Country): unknown

MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER: unknown

BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or Country): unknown

OCCUPATION: track laborer

THE ABOVE STATED PERSONAL PARTICULARS ARE TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

(Informant) E. C. Chapman

(Address) Ft Madison Ia

(Over)

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH.

DATE OF DEATH: 9 (Month) 29 (Day) 1905 (Year)

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from Wed. Sept 27 1905 to Friday 9/29 1905

that I last saw him alive on 9/27 1905

and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 9.30 a. M. The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:

Meningitis

(DURATION) DAYS

Contributory

(DURATION) DAYS

(Signed) E. C. Chapman M. D.

9/29 1905 (Address) Ft. Madison Ia

SPECIAL INFORMATION only for Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents.

Former or Usual Residence Mexico How long at Place of Death? 2 Days

Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? don't know

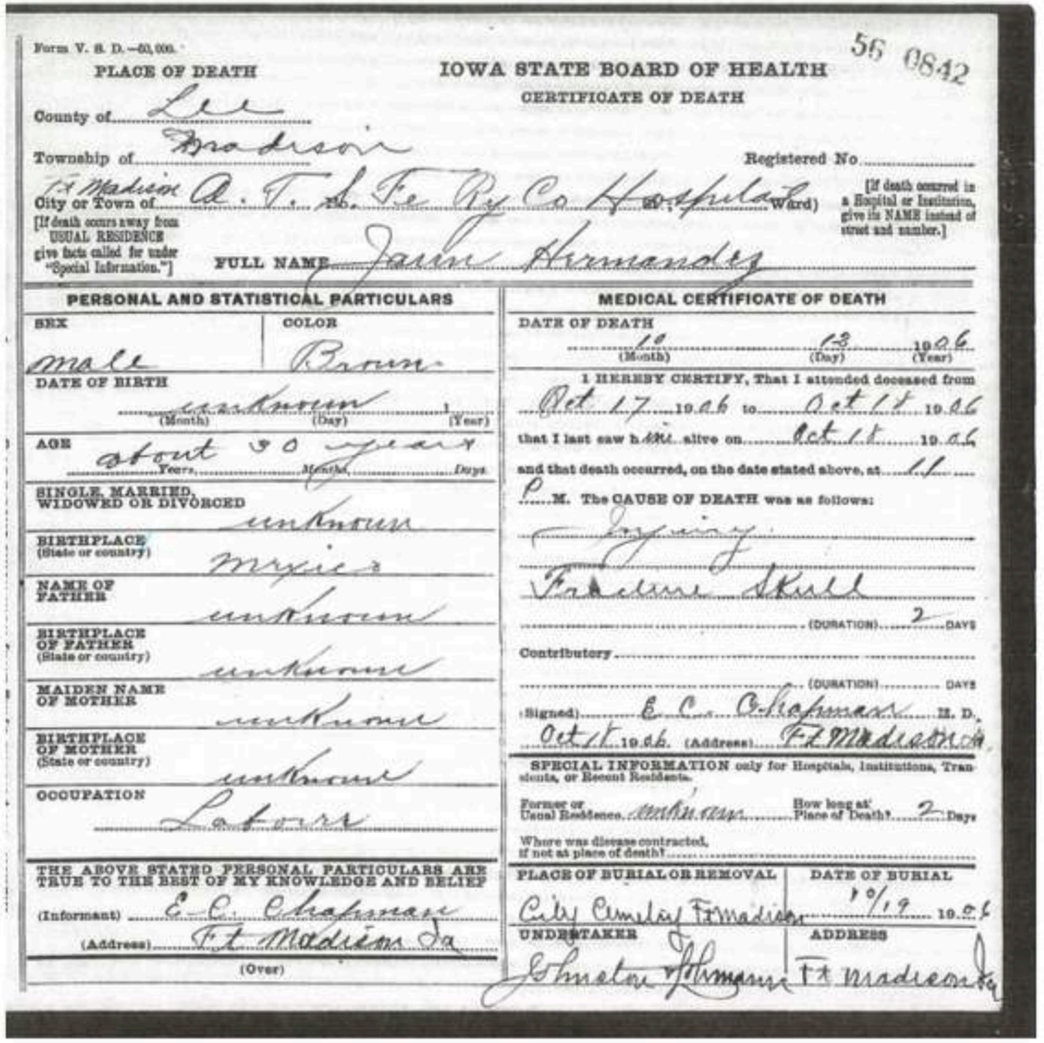
PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL: Ft Madison Ia Alter Cemetery

DATE OF BURIAL: 9/29 1905

UNDERTAKER: Johnston & Lohmann

ADDRESS: Ft Madison

1906: Juan Hernandez, railroad laborer (about 30) dies from a fractured skull injury.



Form V. S. D.—60,000.

56 0842

PLACE OF DEATH

IOWA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

County of Lee

Township of Madison

Registered No.

Ft Madison City or Town of A. T. & S. Fe Ry Co Hospital (No. of House; Ward) [If death occurred in a Hospital or Institution, give its NAME instead of street and number.]

[If death occurs away from USUAL RESIDENCE give facts called for under "Special Information."]

FULL NAME Juan Hernandez

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

SEX: Male

COLOR: Brown

DATE OF BIRTH: unknown (Month) (Day) 1 (Year)

AGE: about 30 Years, Months, Days

SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED: unknown

BIRTHPLACE (State or country): Mexico

NAME OF FATHER: unknown

BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country): unknown

MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER: unknown

BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country): unknown

OCCUPATION: Laborer

THE ABOVE STATED PERSONAL PARTICULARS ARE TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

(Informant) E. C. Chapman

(Address) Ft Madison Ia

(Over)

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

DATE OF DEATH: 10 (Month) 13 (Day) 1906 (Year)

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from Oct 17 1906 to Oct 18 1906

that I last saw him alive on Oct 18 1906

and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 11 P.M. The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:

Injuries

Fracture Skull

(DURATION) 2 DAYS

Contributory

(DURATION) DAYS

(Signed) E. C. Chapman M. D.

Oct 18 1906. (Address) Ft Madison Ia

SPECIAL INFORMATION only for Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents.

Former or Usual Residence. unknown How long at Place of Death? 2 Days

Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death?

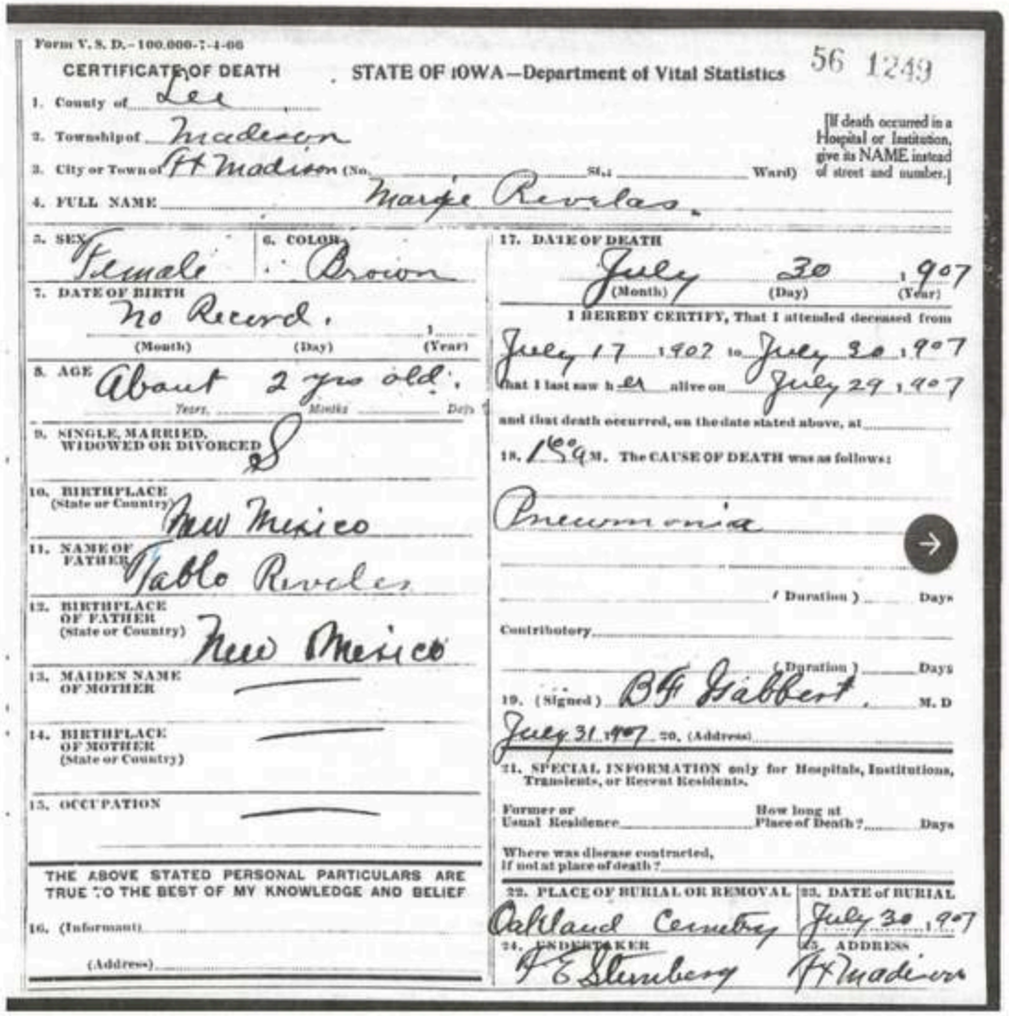
PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL: City Cemetery Ft Madison

DATE OF BURIAL: 10/19 1906

UNDERTAKER: Schnatter & Ahrmann

ADDRESS: Ft Madison Ia

1907: Maria [Revilas] (about 2 years old (no record of birth date) died of pneumonia. Maria and father born in New Mexico. No mother listed.



Form V. S. D.–100,000-7-4-06

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH . STATE OF IOWA—Department of Vital Statistics 56 1249

1. County of Lee
2. Township of Madison
3. City or Town of Ft Madison (No. ____ St. ____ Ward) [If death occurred in a Hospital or Institution, give its NAME instead of street and number.]
4. FULL NAME Marie Revilas.

5. SEX Female | 6. COLOR Brown

7. DATE OF BIRTH No Record. (Month) (Day) (Year)

8. AGE About 2 yrs old. Years Months Days

9. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED S

10. BIRTHPLACE (State or Country) New Mexico

11. NAME OF FATHER Pablo Revilas

12. BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or Country) New Mexico

13. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER —

14. BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or Country) —

15. OCCUPATION —

THE ABOVE STATED PERSONAL PARTICULARS ARE TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

16. (Informant) ____ (Address) ____

17. DATE OF DEATH July (Month) 30 (Day) 1907 (Year)

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from July 17 1907 to July 30 1907 that I last saw h[illegible] alive on July 29 1907 and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at ____

18. 1[illegible]0 M. The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:

Pneumonia

(Duration) ____ Days

Contributory ____ (Duration) ____ Days

19. (Signed) B H Gabbert, M. D

July 31 1907 20. (Address) ____

21. SPECIAL INFORMATION only for Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents.

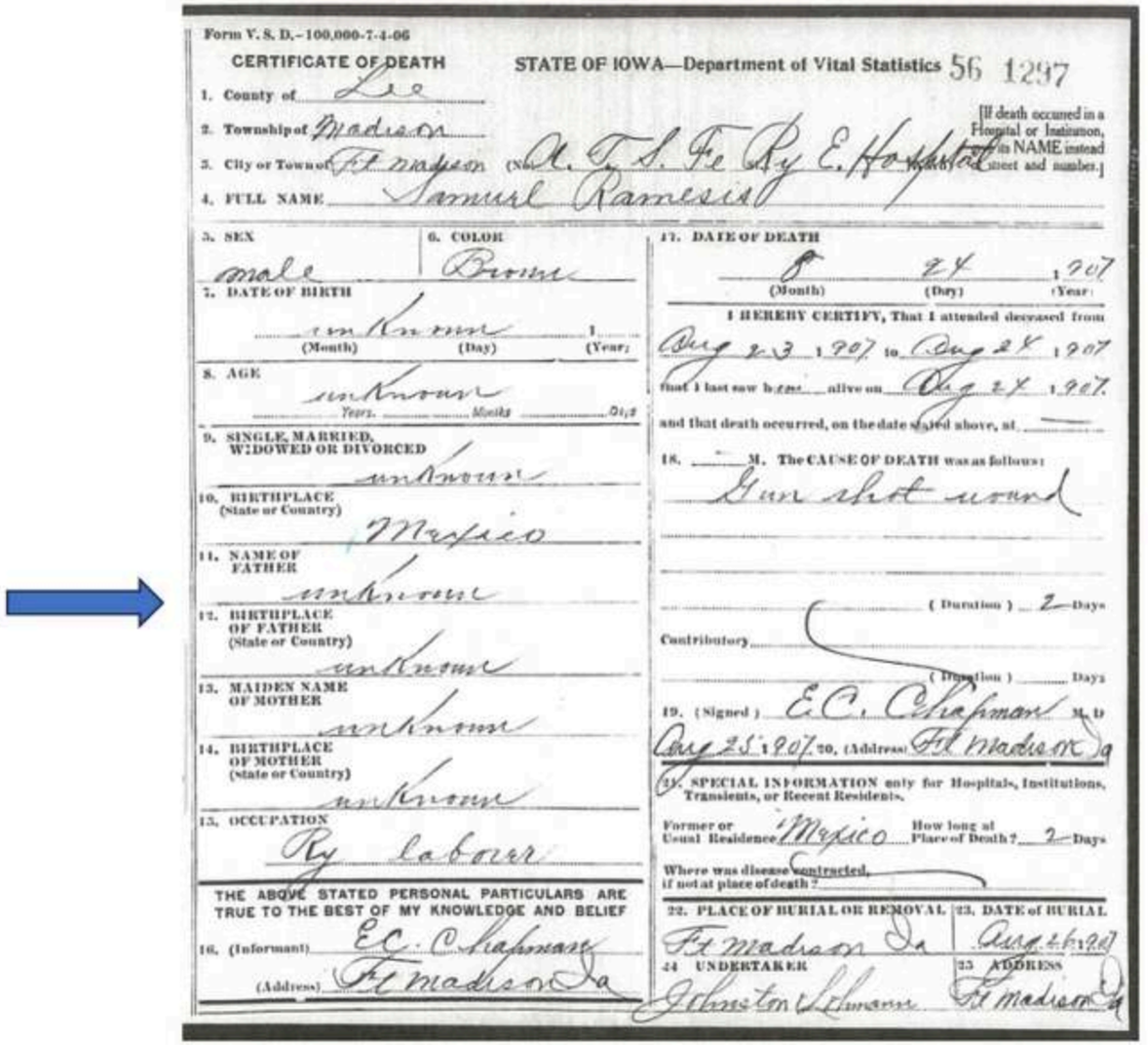
Former or Usual Residence ____ How long at Place of Death? ____ Days

Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? ____

22. PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL Oakland Cemetery | 23. DATE of BURIAL July 30 1907

24. UNDERTAKER F E Stemberg | 25. ADDRESS Ft Madison

1907: Samuel [Ramesis], railroad laborer, died from a gun shot wound.
1907 and 1909: Three (3) people died of pneumonia and two (2) from railroad injuries.



Form V. S. D.–100,000-7-4-06

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH — STATE OF IOWA—Department of Vital Statistics — 56 1297

1. County of Lee
2. Township of Madison
3. City or Town of Ft madison (If death occurred in a Hospital or Institution, give its NAME instead of street and number.) A. T. S. Fe Ry E. Hospital
4. FULL NAME Samuel Ramesis
5. SEX male
6. COLOR Brown
7. DATE OF BIRTH unknown (Month) (Day) (Year)
8. AGE unknown Years Months Days
9. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED unknown
10. BIRTHPLACE (State or Country) Mexico
11. NAME OF FATHER unknown
12. BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or Country) unknown
13. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER unknown
14. BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or Country) unknown
15. OCCUPATION Ry laborer

THE ABOVE STATED PERSONAL PARTICULARS ARE TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

16. (Informant) E C Chapman
(Address) Ft Madison Ia

17. DATE OF DEATH Aug 24 1907 (Month) (Day) (Year)

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from Aug 23 1907 to Aug 24 1907
that I last saw h[illegible] alive on Aug 24 1907.
and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at ——

18. ——M. The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:
Gun shot wound
(Duration) 2 Days
Contributory
(Duration) Days

19. (Signed) E C Chapman M. D
Aug 25 1907 20. (Address) Ft Madison Ia

21. SPECIAL INFORMATION only for Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents.
Former or Usual Residence Mexico How long at Place of Death? 2 Days
Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death?

22. PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL Ft Madison Ia
23. DATE of BURIAL Aug 26 1907
24. UNDERTAKER Johnston & Lehmann
25. ADDRESS Ft Madison Ia

September 16, 1909: The first celebration in Fort Madison of Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821.


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ENTS.

CELEBRATE 99TH ANNIVERSARY

Mexican Employes on Santa Fe Celebrate Important Event.

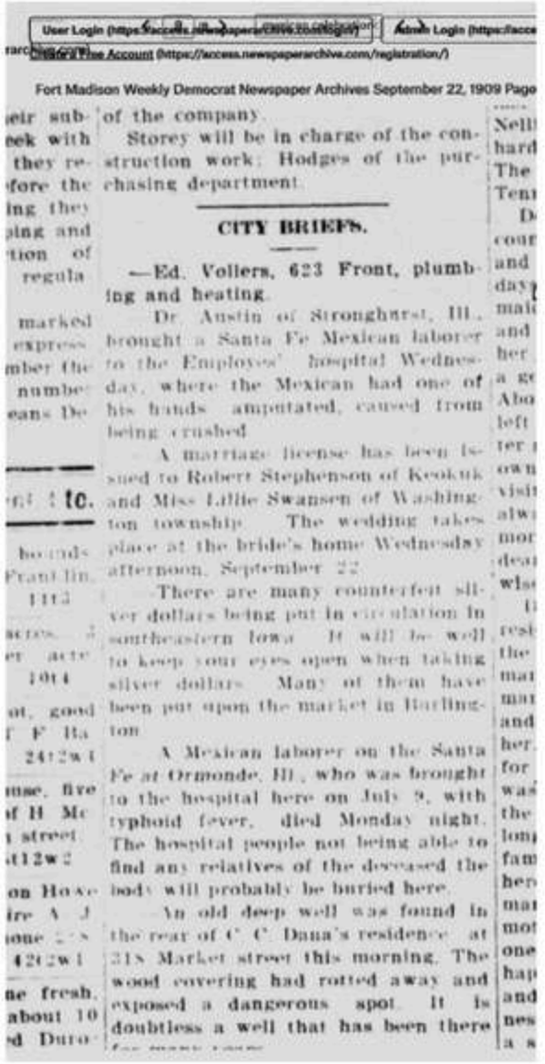
About fifty natives of Old Mexico, employes on the track work of the Santa Fe, are this afternoon celebrating an important event in the history of their country at the coal chute grounds near the Santa Fe yards.

The event is the 99th anniversary of Mexico's independence from Spanish rule. The Fort Madison band is engaged to dispense music.

Speeches appropriate to the occasion were made this afternoon by Senors Lusano Sardeneta, Delfino Estradad and Francisco Elias, their talks being liberally applauded by their Mexican auditors.

Two boarding cars near which the celebration is being held are gaily decorated with the Mexican and United States colors.

September 22, 1909: Death of first Santa Fe laborer from Mexico reported in newspaper. Died of typhoid fever; no relatives located, buried locally. A section of the Fort Madison City Cemetery was used to bury indigent, unknown, and unclaimed dead (potter's field).



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of the company.

Storey will be in charge of the construction work; Hodges of the purchasing department.

CITY BRIEFS.

—Ed. Vollers, 623 Front, plumbing and heating.

Dr. Austin of Stronghurst, Ill., brought a Santa Fe Mexican laborer to the Employes' hospital Wednesday, where the Mexican had one of his hands amputated, caused from being crushed.

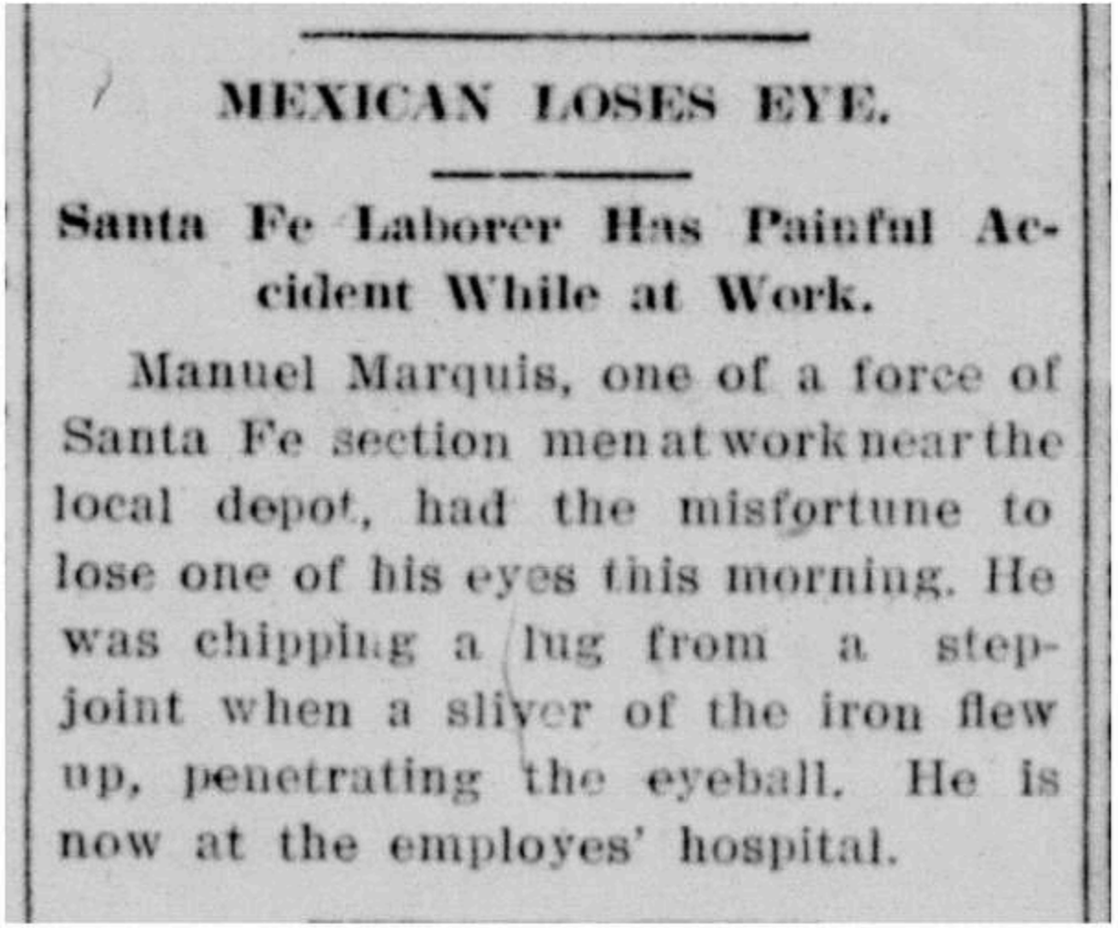
A marriage license has been issued to Robert Stephenson of Keokuk and Miss Lillie Swansen of Washington township. The wedding takes place at the bride's home Wednesday afternoon, September 22.

There are many counterfeit silver dollars being put in circulation in southeastern Iowa. It will be well to keep your eyes open when taking silver dollars. Many of them have been put upon the market in Burlington.

A Mexican laborer on the Santa Fe at Ormonde, Ill., who was brought to the hospital here on July 9, with typhoid fever, died Monday night. The hospital people not being able to find any relatives of the deceased the body will probably be buried here.

An old deep well was found in the rear of C. C. Dana's residence at 218 Market street this morning. The wood covering had rotted away and exposed a dangerous spot. It is doubtless a well that has been there

September 27, 1911: Manuel Marquis, a Santa Fe section crew member, reported losing an eye due to a steel sliver stuck in his eye.



MEXICAN LOSES EYE.

Santa Fe Laborer Has Painful Accident While at Work.

Manuel Marquis, one of a force of Santa Fe section men at work near the local depot, had the misfortune to lose one of his eyes this morning. He was chipping a lug from a step-joint when a sliver of the iron flew up, penetrating the eyeball. He is now at the employes' hospital.

Santa Fe rail yard coal chute injury.



Mexican Badly Hurt.

Saturday evening Dioniso Gomez, a Mexican, was letting a car down the coal chute and it got away from him and bumped into another car knocking him off and smashing the bone in his right leg between the knee and ankle. He was taken to Dr. Bennett and the injury was dressed. It was not necessary to amputate the leg as some supposed.

September 17, 1912: Second celebration of Mexico's Independence. The article reported, "scores of Mexicans in clean bandanas and pressed overalls paraded down the street during the entire day." Mexican workers took the day off.



MEXICANS MINGLE IN CELEBRATION

YESTERDAY THEIR FOURTH OF JULY.

Local Foreigners Take a Day Off From Work—Disputes Concerning Revolutionary Brothers.

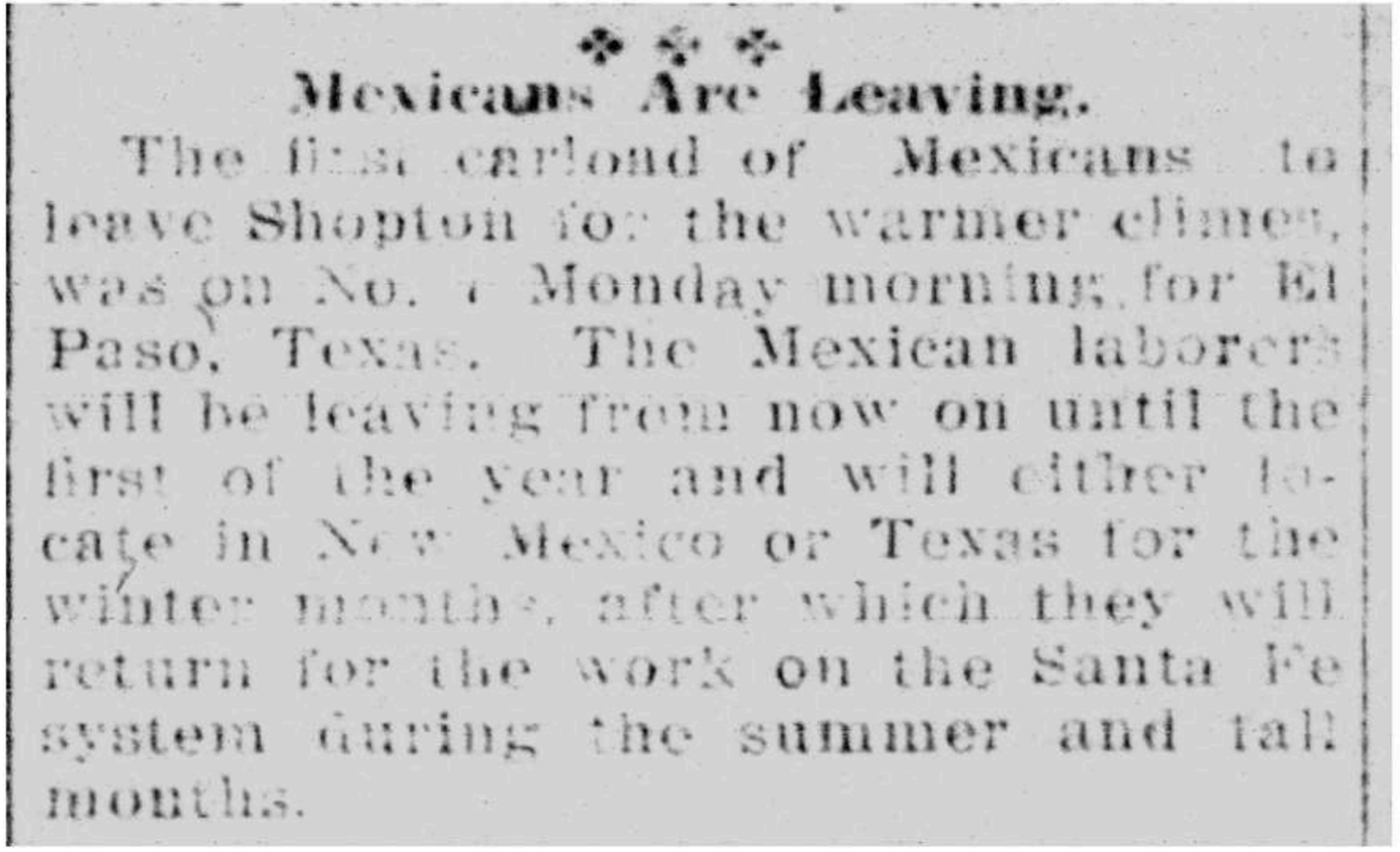
Monday was Mexico's Fourth-of-July. On that day the natives of the revolutionary state duly acknowledged a remembrance of their country's independence from Spain. However, as the condition of affairs down in the home country does not lathe-work celebration most of the patriotism was displayed elsewhere, particularly so in the United States where innumerable Mexicans are employed by railroads.

Locally the event was quite manifest. Scores of Mexicans in clean bandanas and pressed overalls paraded the streets during the entire day, the occasion seeming to be of such importance that it demanded their taking a day off from their work. The work of the section hands had to wait and the pay of the foreigners had to be saved long enough to give the recognition to their country's freedom.

Somehow difficulties arose in the spread of patriotic feelings. It seems that by celebrating the day and parading certain national colors they announced their sympathies with a certain division of the revolutionists or regulars. And since the state of feeling among them is just as varied as a United States railroad ranges it south of the Rio Grande, naturally these factions are apt to proceed in a most preoccupied manner, and the Mexican section hands have the battles and politics to almost as great extent as the peasants in their own country. This seemed to be the condition here Monday, and strained temperature existed between the factions which engaged on the business streets. Upon on Front street the rather scarce Mexicans met a force of Mexicans without colors, political designs were given to friends jubilee and it lasted for a while as though the two sections would run it in earnest. While the dispute was at its height another delegation joined the ranks and the others found themselves in such a minority that they beat a re-

treat

December 23, 1914: "The first carload of Mexicans to leave Shopton for the warmer climate ... for El Paso, Texas ...They will return for work on the Santa Fe system during the summer."



Mexicans Are Leaving.

The first carload of Mexicans to leave Shopton for the warmer climes, was on No. 4 Monday morning for El Paso, Texas. The Mexican laborers will be leaving from now on until the first of the year and will either locate in New Mexico or Texas for the winter months, after which they will return for the work on the Santa Fe system during the summer and fall months.

John Hansman: March 13, 1916, Santa Fe employee Romario Gomez received 13 pellet wounds from a shotgun, but he refused to name the assailant. Three months later, Gomez and three Santa Fe Mexican workers attempted to force their way into the bunk car occupied by Jose Leal and his wife. Leal “grazed” Gomez in the forehead by the rifle shot and physically attacked several of the other intruders. Leal received bruises and knife wounds.

July 16, 1917: “Mrs. Antonio [Macieo], a resident of the Mexican village at the Santa Fe yards … the woman was cleaning and beating a mattress just outside of a bunk car … the natives of the Mexican village are in deadly fear of them [snakes].”



MEXICAN WOMAN BITTEN BY SNAKE

SPREADING ADDER STRIKES AND CAUSES SERIOUS WOUND.

Small Son of Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Smith Fell and Broke Left Arm While Playing Sunday.

To be bitten by a snake, not one of the harmless garden variety, but a poisonous spreading adder, was the unpleasant and startling experience of Mrs. Antonio Macieo, a resident of the Mexican village in the Santa Fe yards Sunday afternoon.

The woman was cleaning and beating a mattress just outside of a bunk car Sunday afternoon at about 4 o'clock, when she became weary, and seeing a box car near her, decided to sit down and take life easy for a while.

Overturning the box, she was horrified to feel a sharp pain in her left hand and, withdrawing it hastily saw a squat poison adder curled up ready to strike again.

Calling to some men she rushed from the scene and a doctor was hurridly summoned to attend to the wound of the well nigh frantic woman. The usual method of treating snake bites was resorted to, and it was found that the woman was far more frightened than she was injured by the bite of the snake.

Although the sight of a snake of the spreading adder type is not very common hereabouts, many have been killed in the Santa Fe yards recently, and the natives of the Mexican village are in deadly fear of them, but this is the first instance where a person has been bitten by the repulsive reptiles.

Small Boy Breaks Arm

August 1, 1917: “FLAMES REAKED HAVOC ON SHOPTON SETTLEMENT … the Mexican village at the Santa Fe yards was all but wiped off the map by fire … The cars which are the residences of the Mexican laborers, were in a very dry and flammable condition. It was not long before the entire village was seething mass of flames.”



MEXICAN VILLAGE PREY OF FLAMES

FLAMES WREAKED HAVOC ON SHOPTON SETTLEMENT.

Blaze of Unknown Origin Discovered at 2:25 This Morning—Many Mexicans Are Now Homeless.

Heralded by the sweeping and the crackling of the angry flames and the popping of countless contraband bullets which happened to lie within the path of the flames, the Mexican village at the Santa Fe yards was all but wiped off the map by a fire which started at about 2:25 this morning.

As soon as the fire was discovered repose in the interior of one of the bunk cars, the affrighted inhabitants of the village spread the alarm to the members of the Santa Fe fire company, and in a short time there were several streams of water pouring on the blaze.

Owing to the fact, however, that the cars which were the residences of the Mexican laborers, were in a very dry and inflamable condition, it was not long until the entire village was a seething mass of flames.

The alarm of fire was turned in to the central station after the fire had assumed dangerous proportions and the big fire truck was immediately hurried to the scene. It was quickly seen that the greater part of the village was doomed to destruction and the firemen of the Santa Fe and the city companies concentrated themselves with preventing the further spreading of the flames.

A Wild Scene.

The burning village, throwing a wild glare over the surrounding district, revealed sights of indescribable wreck and confusion. The natives of the village were huddled in little groups about the outskirts of the flames, each guarding what little of belongings had been saved from the cars before being driven away by the rapidly mounting flames.

The fire, as it ate its way into the cars, found many a treasure trove of hidden weapons and bullets, and the intermittent explosion of some of the cartridges and the dread of the lead striking some nearby object made the work of the firemen one of peril.

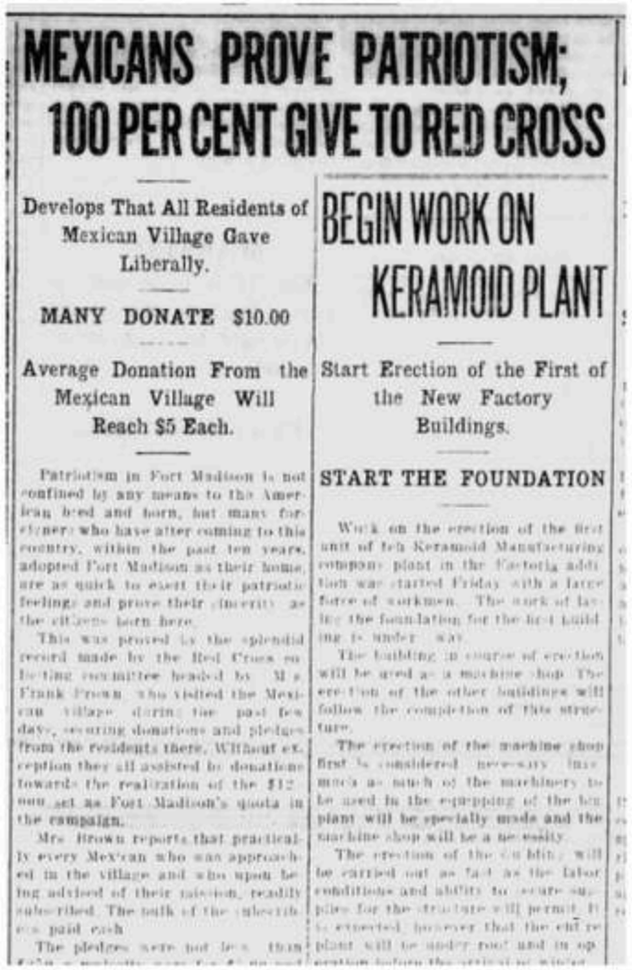
As quickly as the flames mounted they died away before the efforts of the firemen and the pale light of the early morn saw only a few bunk cars and a wide area of smoking ruins of what was yesterday a prosperous little community.

Grass Fire Tuesday.

Another grass fire, or rather one of

Spring 1918: Many Mexican contract workers declined to return to Fort Madison for the summer railroad work season. They demanded a wage increase of 25 cents a day. WWI created acute labor shortages in Fort Madison. Consequently, Mexican contract laborers received the requested raise, and the labor shortages at the Santa were resolved.

May 25, 1918: Mexican village residents “donating liberally” to the Red Cross … Mrs. Brown (Mexican women married to an Anglo American) who visited the Mexican village during the past few days, securing donations and pledges from the residents there.”



MEXICANS PROVE PATRIOTISM; 100 PER CENT GIVE TO RED CROSS

Develops That All Residents of Mexican Village Gave Liberally.

MANY DONATE $10.00

Average Donation From the Mexican Village Will Reach $5 Each.

Patriotism in Fort Madison is not confined by any means to the American bred and born, but many foreigners who have after coming to this country, within the past ten years, adopted Fort Madison as their home, are as quick to exert their patriotic feelings and prove their sincerity as the citizens born here.

This was proved by the splendid record made by the Red Cross soliciting committee headed by Mrs. Frank Brown who visited the Mexican village during the past few days, securing donations and pledges from the residents there. Without exception they all assisted by donations towards the realization of the $12 000 set as Fort Madison's quota in the campaign.

Mrs. Brown reports that practically every Mexican who was approached in the village and who upon being advised of their mission, readily subscribed. The bulk of the subscriptions paid each

The pledges were not less than

BEGIN WORK ON KERAMOID PLANT

Start Erection of the First of the New Factory Buildings.

START THE FOUNDATION

Work on the erection of the first unit of the Keramoid Manufacturing company plant in the Victoria addition was started Friday with a large force of workmen. The work of laying the foundation for the first building is under way.

The building in course of erection will be used as a machine shop. The erection of the other buildings will follow the completion of this structure.

The erection of the machine shop first is considered necessary inasmuch as much of the machinery to be used in the equipping of the big plant will be specially made and the machine shop will be a necessity.

The erection of the buildings will be carried out as fast as the labor conditions and ability to secure supplies for the structure will permit. It is expected, however, that the entire plant will be under roof and in operation before the arrival of winter

A fire destroyed most of *La Yarda* near 23rd Street. Afterwards, in 1918 many contract Mexican were forced to live in tents provided by the Santa Fe.



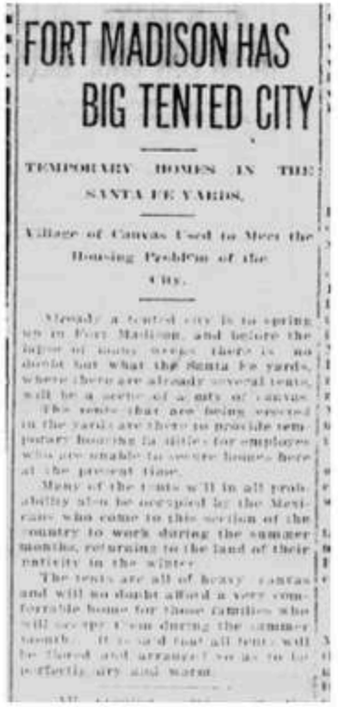
January 17, 1919: “NEW STORE FOR LITTLE MEXICO.” [Enandio Laureles] owner. There was another store “catering exclusively to the residents of the village.”



NEW STORE FOR "LITTLE MEXICO"

Little Mexico will soon be able to boast a new mercantile establishment if the rumor current about the village for several days past is to be credited. The venture is being considered by Enandio Laureles, it is said, who has had considerable experience operating stores in other Mexican settlements. It is understood that the establishment will carry several lines of merchandise. Little Mexico already has one store catering exclusively to the residents of the village.

Fort Madison Democrat April 10, 1919: “TEMPORARY HOMES IN THE SANTA FE YARDS … The tents that are being erected on the Santa Fe tards are to provide temporary housing facilities for employees who are unable to secure homes here at the present time. Tents are all of heavy canvas and will no doubt afford a very comfortable home for families occupying them during the summer month … all tents will be floored and arranged so as to be perfectly dry and warm.”



FORT MADISON HAS BIG TENTED CITY

TEMPORARY HOMES IN THE SANTA FE YARDS.

Village of Canvas Used to Meet the Housing Problem of the City.



After another fire in 1919 that destroyed four bunk cars at the Mexican village, the Santa Fe was faced with the reality that bunk-car housing was substandard and dangerous, such as the bunk car below.



Work and life at the Santa Fe “Mexican shanty town.”



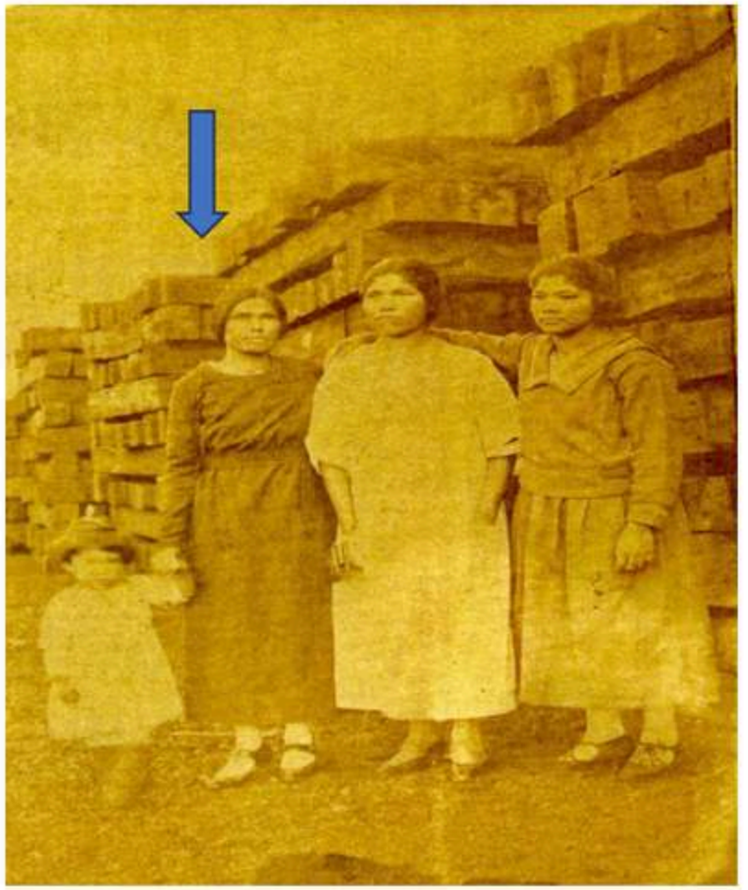


(Teresa Garcia) Santa Fe Mexican worker besides shanty (*La Yarda* or *El Cometa)*



(Teresa Garcia) Mexican women in most likely *El Cometa*. Note railroad ties in background.





Women at *El Cometa*: sisters Josefa Diaz Puga, on the left and Margarita Diaz Vasquez on the right. The middle two may be Teresa Diaz and her mother Norberta Diaz. Note railroad ties and boxcars in background.



1917: After the wedding, Maria and Vicente Mendez make their way to their boxcar home with friends. In the background were boxcars used to house Mexican workers and their families.

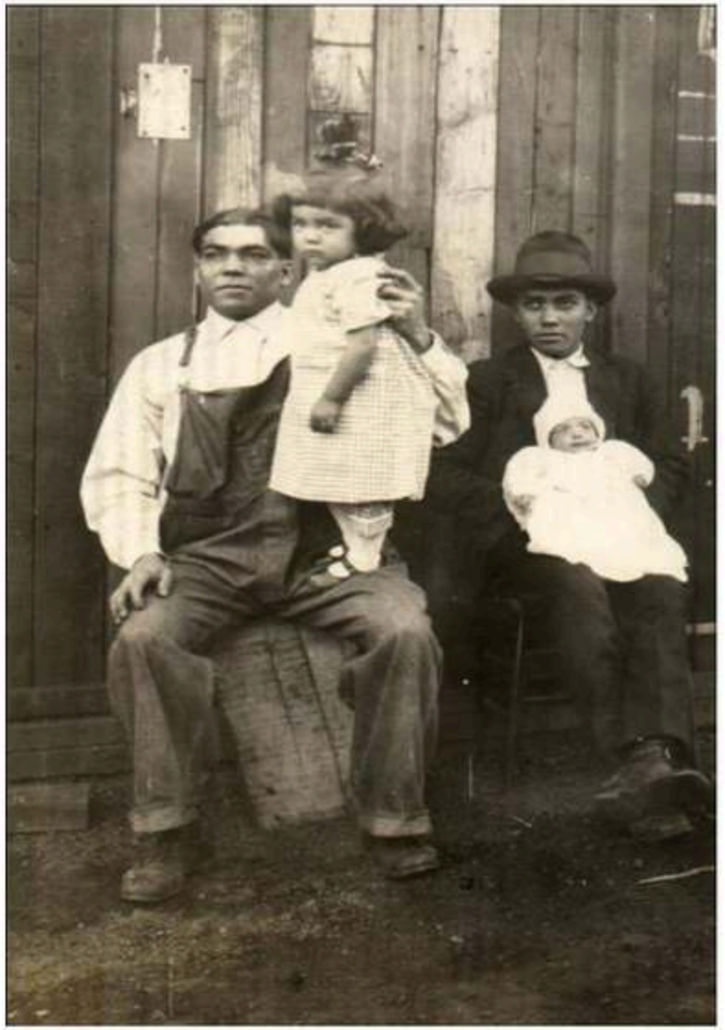


Jose Salazar, Source: Gloria Alvarez



Jesus Pabon, great-grandfather of Andrea and RJ Hernandez.





Left: Ramona Moralez posing in front of a cattle rail car at the Santa Fe rail yards.
Right: Ramona Moralez by her flower garden.



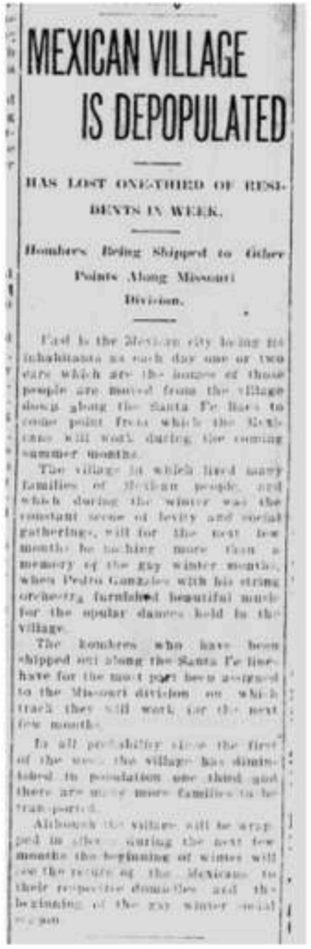


Mexican shanty most likely at *El Cometa*.



Hansman: Between 1919 and 1921, the labor shortages experienced by the Santa Fe during the war ended when many regular employees returned from serving in the armed forces, a situation that resulted in scores of Santa Fe contract Mexican workers being laid off and returned to Mexico. Many of the more settled and “responsible Hispanics” remained permanently in the local Santa Fe employment.

April 10, 1919: “MEXICAN VILLAGE IS DEPOPULATED. TEMPORARY HOUSING IN THE SANTA FE YARDS … Fast is the Mexican City losing its inhabitants as each day one or two cars which are the homes of these people are moved from the village down along the Santa Fe to some point from which the Mexicana will work the coming summer months.”



MEXICAN VILLAGE IS DEPOPULATED

HAS LOST ONE-THIRD OF RESIDENTS IN WEEK.

Hombres Being Shipped to Other Points Along Missouri Division.

Fast is the Mexican city losing its inhabitants as each day one or two cars which are the homes of these people are moved from the village down along the Santa Fe lines to some point from which the Mexicana will work during the coming summer months.

The village in which lived many families of Mexican people, and which during the winter was the constant scene of levity and social gatherings, will for the next few months be nothing more than a memory of the gay winter months, when Pedro Gonzales with his string orchestra furnished beautiful music for the popular dances held in the village.

The hombres who have been shipped out along the Santa Fe lines have for the most part been assigned to the Missouri division on which track they will work for the next few months.

In all probability since the first of the week the village has diminished in population one third and there are many more families to be transported.

Although the village will be wrapped in silence during the next few months the beginning of winter will see the return of the Mexicans to their respective domiciles and the beginning of the gay winter social season.

August 19, 1919: “MEXICANS PLAN A BIG CELEBRATION. HOMBRES TO STAGE LARGE CELBRATION. The sound of castanets will lure the flighty feet of the hombres to the classic movements of the Fandango; the flight of fireworks into the air of the starry night will dazzle the eyes of residents of the Mexican colony … Several swarthy (dark, dusky) skinned natives of the land of festive frijoles approached city and county officials today in an effort to gain official sanction for the big pow-wow, but it is patent: that the Mexican equivalent of a good old Irish hoe-down will take place in the historic colony …”

August 20, 1919: “UN GRAN BAILE” PLANNED …A big dance with Mexican strains featured a monster pyrotechnic display and other amusements are planned for the day, which will prove to be a red letter one (happy, special) for all of the natives of the Cactus republic …”

September 4, 1919: Left “MEXICANS GATHER IN THE VILLAGE … HOMBRES MAKE MERRY IN PATRIOTIC EVENT … celebration in Little Mexico today with freely flowing Bero, mesqual and other drinks of the natives of the country of revolution divided by the Rio Grande. The whole village turned itself into a veritable abandon of reckless enjoyment … and carefree lack of restraint.” Right September 17, 1919: “MEXICANS FAILED IN EVENT TUESDAY… MEXICAN WERE QUIET AND PEACEFUL HERE.”


MEXICANS GATHER IN VILLAGE HERE


MEXICANS FAILED IN EVENT TUESDAY

November 11, 1919: “FLAMES MENACED MEXICAN COLONY … GREAT EXCITEMENT REIGNED AMONG RESIDENTS. GRASS FIRE IN LITTLE MEXICO THREATENED TO DESTROY SETTLEMENT … Several pig pens scattered promiscuously over the right of way were in the path of the approaching fire …Within a short time after the fire was discovered the whole population of the village from the eldest hombre to the tiniest nino and the reserves of colored folks had responded to the common danger …”



FLAMES MENACED MEXICAN COLONY

GREAT EXCITEMENT REIGNED AMONG RESIDENTS.

Grass Fire in Little Mexico Threatened to Destroy the Settlement.

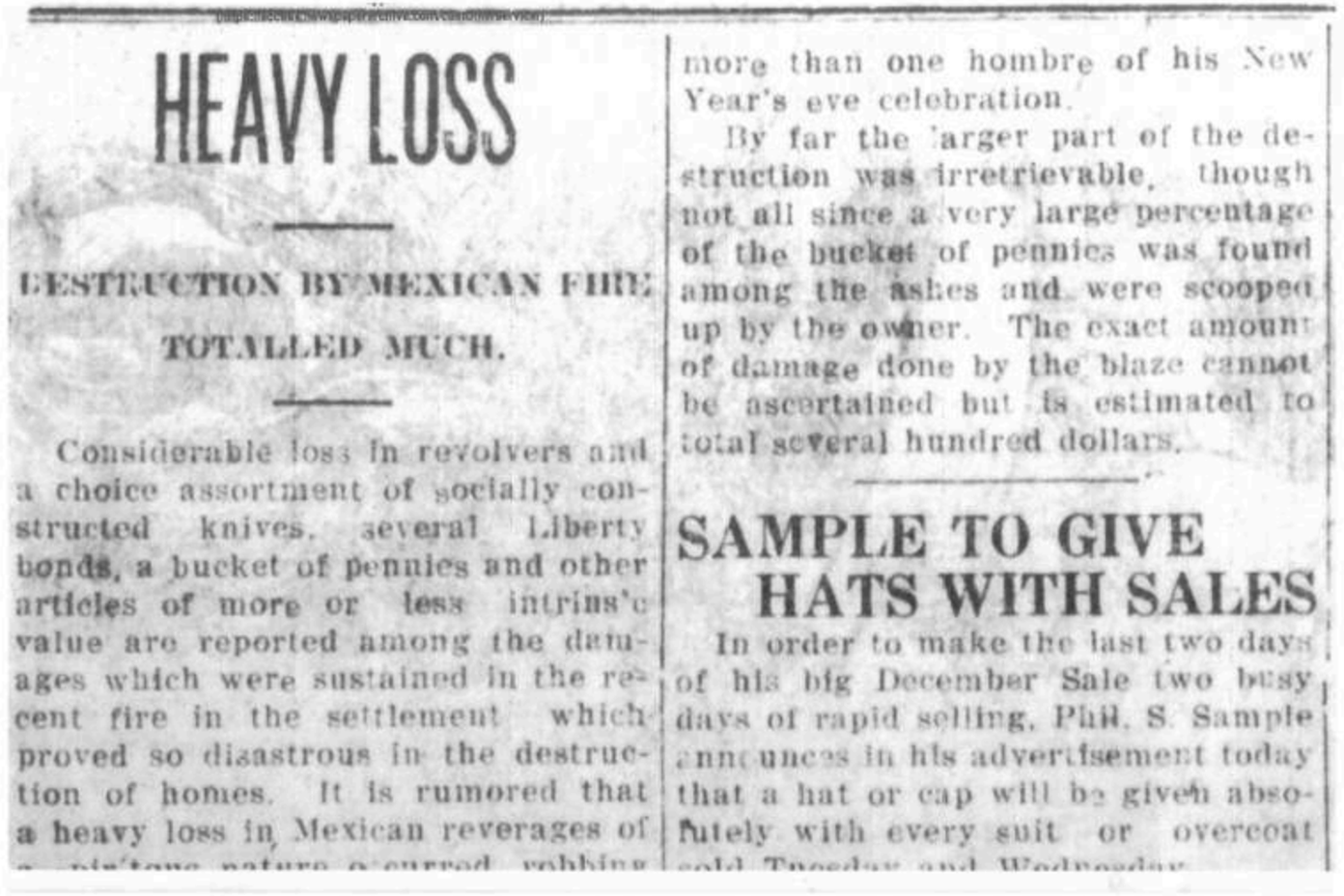
Crackling flames, squealing pigs, screaming women, shouting, running men resulted in Little Mexico Sunday morning when a fiery spark thrown out of the smoke stack of a passing Burlington train wafted over the surrounding right of way and, still glowing brightly, nestled in a bed of well dried grass not far from the Mexican village. Its arrival was regarded with indifference, but when its ardor continued the grass soon waxed enthusiastic and broke into a blaze.

Under the gentle urgings of a northern breeze the conflagration swiftly grew and spread with alarming rapidity until the women in the nearby village discovered the miniature prairie fire and gave the alarm. Every hombre and colored citizen within hearing distance came hotfoot to join in the battle with the flames to save the village.

Several pig pens scattered promiscuously over the right of way were in the path of the approaching fire. The pigs vented their fright in terrified squeals that rose shrill above the noise of the burning grass and rubbish. Fortunately the pens were of the small type so prevalent among the citizens in Little Mexico, and were soon carried out of the way by the firefighters.

Within a short time after the fire was discovered the whole population of the village from the eldest hombre to the tiniest nino and the reserves of colored folks had responded to the common danger with such energy that the flames were brought under control and soon stamped out. But not until every inhabitant had received a thorough scare, and every home lover of Little Mexico had been moved to tears—by the pungent smoke which drifted in clouds down the main street of the village.

December 29, 1919: "HEAVY LOSS ... DESTRUCTION OF THE MEXICAN FIRE TOTAL MUCH."



HEAVY LOSS

DESTRUCTION BY MEXICAN FIRE TOTALLED MUCH.

Considerable loss in revolvers and a choice assortment of socially constructed knives, several Liberty bonds, a bucket of pennies and other articles of more or less intrinsic value are reported among the damages which were sustained in the recent fire in the settlement which proved so disastrous in the destruction of homes. It is rumored that a heavy loss in Mexican reverages of [illegible] nature occurred robbing more than one hombre of his New Year's eve celebration.

By far the larger part of the destruction was irretrievable, though not all since a very large percentage of the bucket of pennies was found among the ashes and were scooped up by the owner. The exact amount of damage done by the blaze cannot be ascertained but is estimated to total several hundred dollars.

SAMPLE TO GIVE HATS WITH SALES

In order to make the last two days of his big December Sale two busy days of rapid selling, Phil. S. Sample announces in his advertisement today that a hat or cap will be given absolutely with every suit or overcoat sold Tuesday and Wednesday.

March 28, 1919: Another fire. “Residents of the Mexican village at Shopton were given quite a thrill this morning when fire, starting from an overheated cook stove, broke out in the shack occupied by Mike [Godemez] Godinez and family ... The incident took the form of a panic.”



MEXICAN VILLAGE SCENE OF FIRE

FLAMES DAMAGE ONE HOUSE— CREATES A PANIC.

Residents of the Mexican village at Shopton were given quite a thrill this morning when fire, starting from an overheated cook stove, broke out in the shack occupied by Mike Godemez and family. Fire companies No. 1 and 2 of the Santa Fe responded and put out the blaze before much damage was done.

Other residents of the settlement, fear fire would spread, hurriedly filled the street of the village with their phonographs, trunks and other belongings while the firement extinguished the flames. The incident took the form of a panic.

April 30, 1919: "13TH SON BORN TO MEXICAN HERE ... Juan Alvarez and his wife, residents of the Mexican village here don't know whether to celebrate or not over the arrival of a son ... Of the total number of sons born in the family, six are dead in Old Mexico and the remaining six live with their parents in their two-room shack at the Mexican village here ... Alvarez apparently has no difficulty in raising his masculine family during these hard times although he is only a day laborer for the railroad."

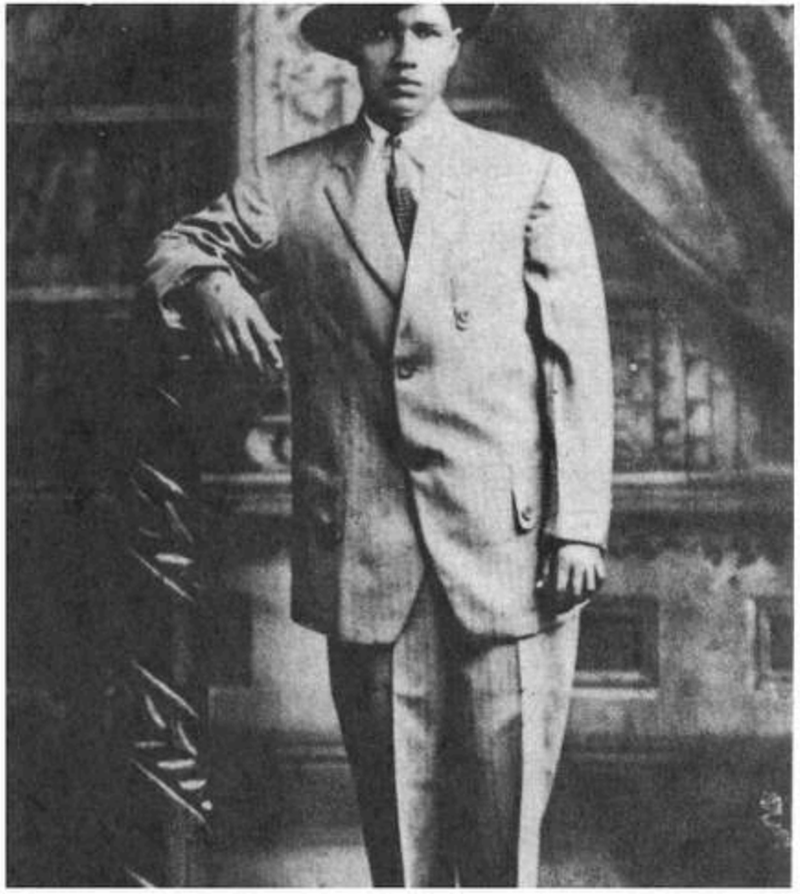


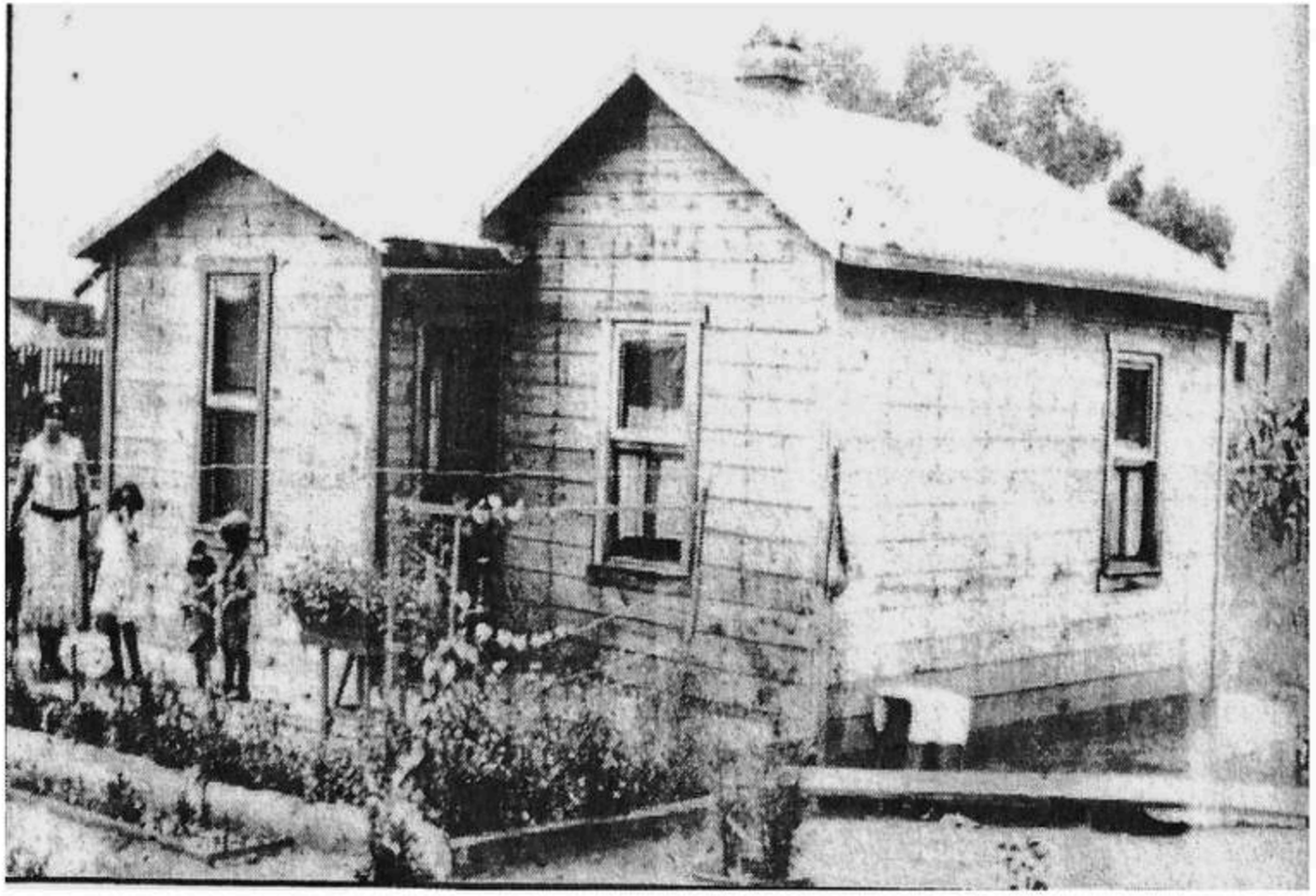
13TH SON BORN

TO MEXICAN HERE

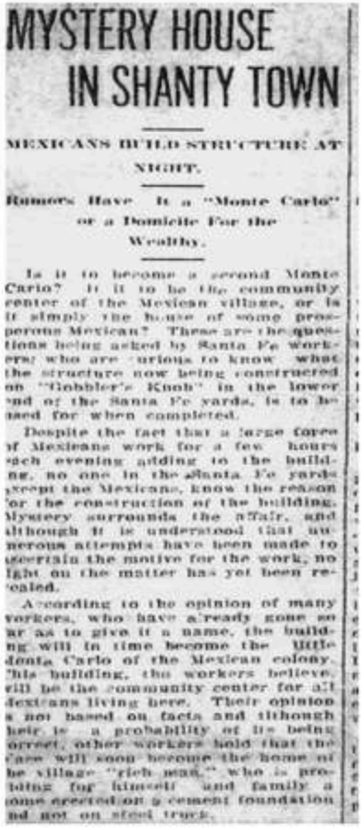
JUAN ALVAREZ AND WIFE HAVE

Felipe Limas. His home was one of the first “conventional” houses built by the Santa Fe ca. 1920





July 2, 1920: “MYSTERY HOUSE IN SHANTY TOWN … MEXICANS BUILD STRUCTURE AT NIGHT … building constructed on ‘Gobbler Knob’ in the lower end of the Santa Fe yards … a large force of Mexicans work several hours each evening adding to the building … the building will in time become a little Monte Carlo of the Mexican colony. The building will become a community center for all Mexicans living here.”



MYSTERY HOUSE IN SHANTY TOWN

MEXICANS BUILD STRUCTURE AT NIGHT.

Rumors Have It a "Monte Carlo" or a Domicile For the Wealthy.

Is it to become a second Monte Carlo? Is it to be the community center of the Mexican village, or is it simply the house of some prosperous Mexican? These are the questions being asked by Santa Fe workers, who are curious to know what the structure now being constructed on "Gobbler's Knob" in the lower end of the Santa Fe yards, is to be used for when completed.

Despite the fact that a large force of Mexicans work for a few hours each evening adding to the building, no one in the Santa Fe yards except the Mexicans, know the reason for the construction of the building. Mystery surrounds the affair, and although it is understood that numerous attempts have been made to ascertain the motive for the work, no light on the matter has yet been revealed.

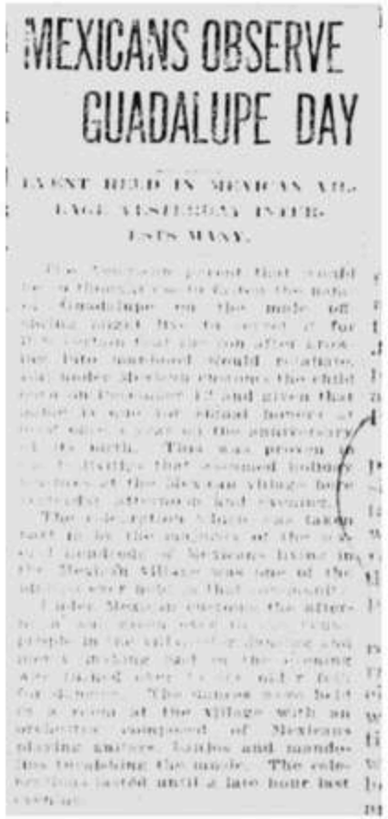
According to the opinion of many workers, who have already gone so far as to give it a name, the building will in time become the "little Santa Carlo of the Mexican colony. This building, the workers believe, will be the community center for all Mexicans living here. Their opinion is not based on facts and although their is a probability of its being correct, other workers hold that the case will soon become the home of the village "rich man," who is preparing for himself and family a home erected on a cement foundation and not on steel truck.

July 20. 1921: “CONDITIONS HIT MEXICAN VILLAGE HERE … Fort Madison’s Picturesque and Troublous Colony Losing Population -- Increase in White Labor is Cause … ’Little Mexico,’ the long-standing troublesome Mexican labor camp of the Santa Fe here, is slowly dwindling away … Less favorable labor conditions and the increase of available white labor for the railroad work of unskilled nature, are said to be the cause … Scores of families are shipped back to old Mexico by the Santa Fe in the past two years upon completion of the war contracts which the railroad held with the men for work in this country … Only the best workmen and most desirable members of this settlement are being kept …


CONDITIONS HIT MEXICAN VILLAGE HERE

Fort Madison's Picturesque and Troublous Colony Losing Population -- Increase in White Labor is Cause.

Left: December 13, 1921: “MEXICANS OBSERVE GUADALUPE DAY … EVENT HELD IN MEXICAN VILLAGE YESTERDAY INTEREST MANY.” Right: “MEXICAN VILLAGE PLANS BIG XMAS … One of the features will be a community Christmas tree. The tree, a monster, was delivered at the village yesterday … Local grocery and department stores trucks are unloading large amounts of supplies … There are more young folks in the village this year than in the past years which probably accounts for the unusual plans …”



MEXICANS OBSERVE GUADALUPE DAY

EVENT HELD IN MEXICAN VIL-
LAGE YESTERDAY INTER-
ESTS MANY.



MEXICAN VILLAGE PLANS BIG XMAS

EXTENSIVE PREPARATIONS FOR OBSERVANCE OF YULETIDE SEASON IN COLONY.

Christmas in the Mexican village this year will be one of unusual celebration and apparent joy for the several hundred inhabitants. Elaborate preparations are being made for the observance of the season.

One of the features will be a community Christmas tree. The tree, a monster, was delivered at the village yesterday. Other smaller trees will also grace the corners in the homes of many of the Mexicans.

Local grocery and department store trucks are unloading large amounts of supplies at the village almost hourly. Indications are that the Mexicans are planning on making this season the most generally observed in the village in years.

As the Mexican is fond of music, local music stores are sharing a large part of the Christmas trade coming from the village.

There are more young folks in the village this year than in past years which probably accounts for the unusual plans being made for observance of the holiday.

May 15, 1922: “PLAN SCHOOL FOR MEXICAN CHILDREN ... Miss Madeline Limas of El Paso Open School for Little Tots in Mexican Village ... according to her brother, Felipe Limas, of the city, who is making arrangements for the school ... Miss Limas, who is well educated, will conduct a school on the kindergarten plan, where children are accustomed only to hearing Spanish spoken by their parents will learn enough English to permit them to take up their studies in the first grades of public and parochial schools ... It is expected that the school will prove of much value to the children in the Mexican Village, who are now handicapped by their lack of knowledge of the English language when they enter city school.”

Another version: “The children only spoke English and Limas wished to preserve their Mexican heritage by teaching them to be bilingual.” Margarita Limas gave classes at her home located on Avenue Q and 28th Street. Students: Left Angie Lozano, Shirley Lozano, Sara Pavon, Henrietta Pilota, Rudolph Limas, Sebastian Alvarez, and Leopoldo Lozano. Inscription: ”In memories of our childhood.”

PLAN SCHOOL FOR MEXICAN CHILDREN

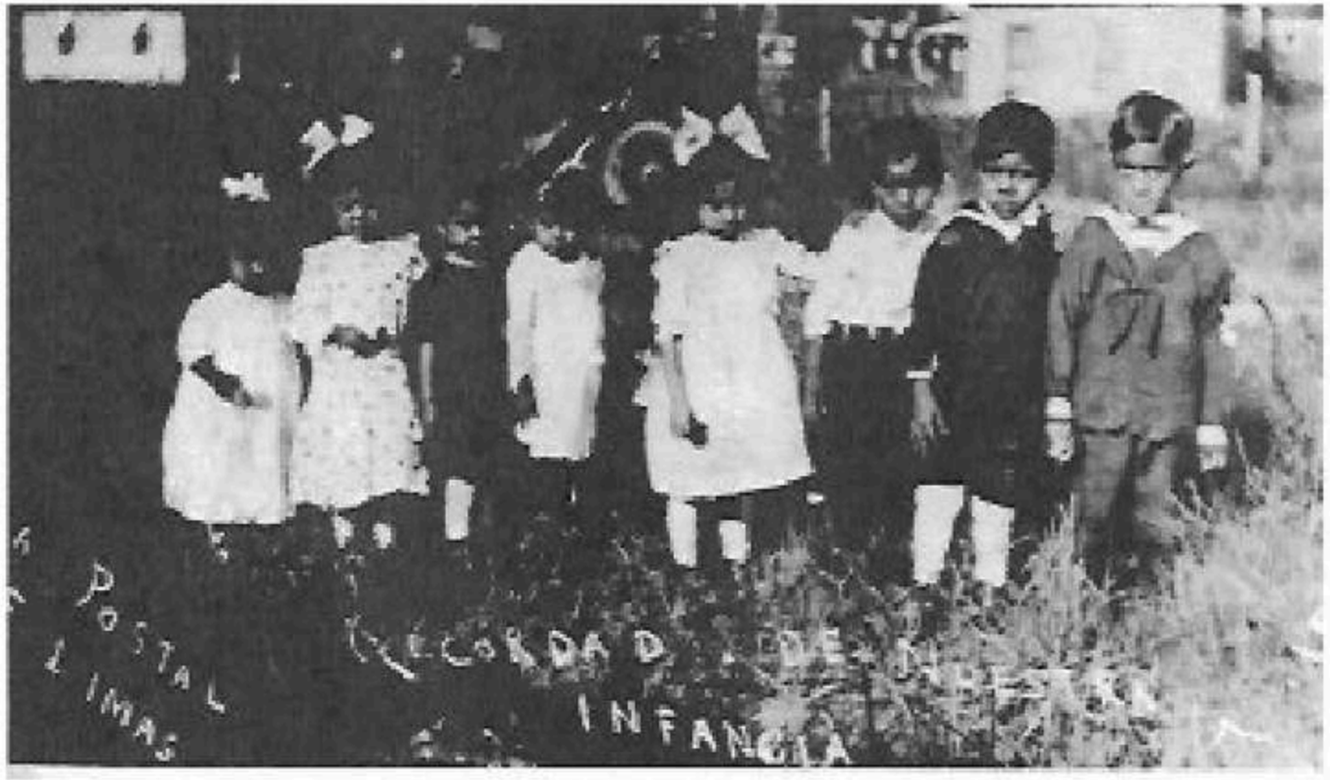
Miss Madelaine Limas of El Paso to Open School for Little Tots in Mexican Village.

Establishment of a school in the Mexican village here for early training of Mexican children to fit them for entrance into the schools of Fort Madison is planned by Miss Madeline Limas of El Paso, Texas, according to her brother, Felipe Limas, of this city, who is now making arrangements for the school.

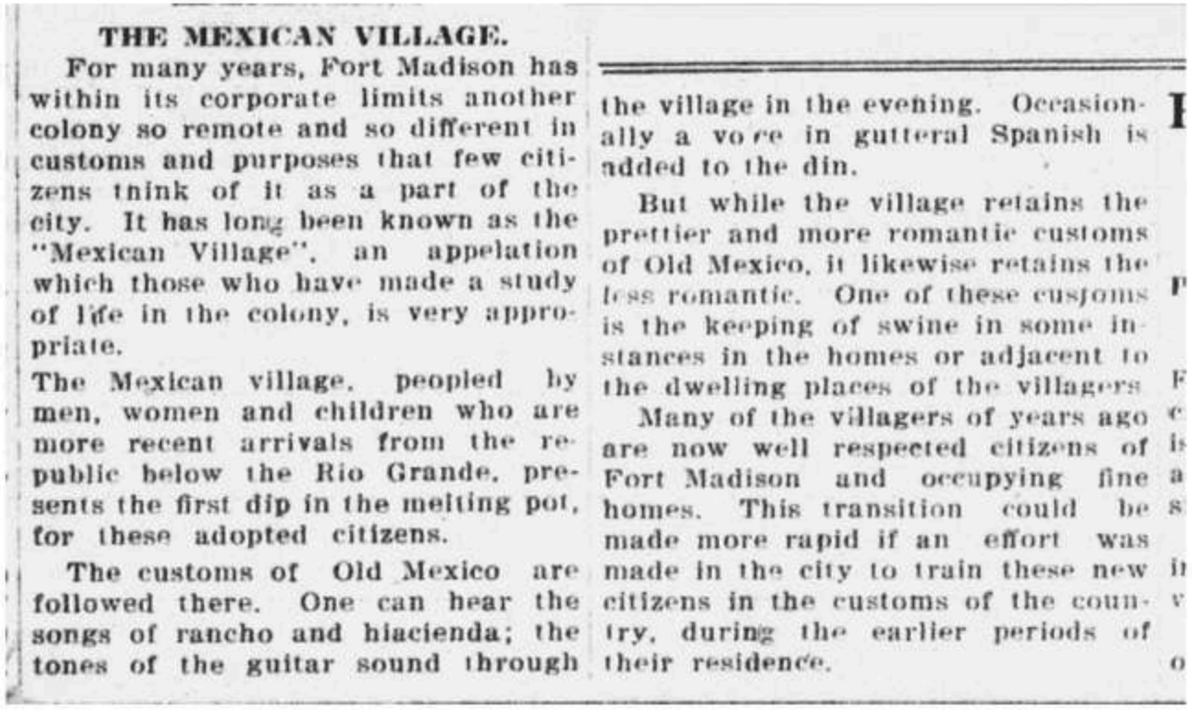
Miss Limas, who is well educated, will conduct a school on the kindergarten plan, where the children, accustomed only to hearing Spanish spoken by their parents, will learn enough English to permit them to take up their studies in the first grades of the public and parochial schools of Fort Madison.

Felipe Limas, who has been employed for several years in the car department of the Santa Fe here and is highly respected both by American and Mexican born friends has induced his sister to come to Fort Madison to establish the school here.

It is expected that the school will prove of much value to the children in the Mexican village, who are now somewhat handicapped by their lack of knowledge of the English language when they enter the city schools.



December 3, 1920: "THE MEXICAN VILLAGE ... For many years, Fort Madison has within its corporate limits another colony so remote and so different in customs and purposes that few citizens think of it as a part of the city ... The Mexican village, peopled by men, women and children who are more recent arrivals from the republic below the Rio Grande, presents the first dip in the melting pot. For these adopted citizens ... one of these customs is the keeping of swine in some instances in the homes or adjacent to the dwelling place of the villagers ... This transition (to American society) could be made more rapid if an effort was made in the city to train these new citizens in the customs of the country, during the earlier periods of their residence."



THE MEXICAN VILLAGE.

For many years, Fort Madison has within its corporate limits another colony so remote and so different in customs and purposes that few citizens think of it as a part of the city. It has long been known as the "Mexican Village", an appelation which those who have made a study of life in the colony, is very appropriate.

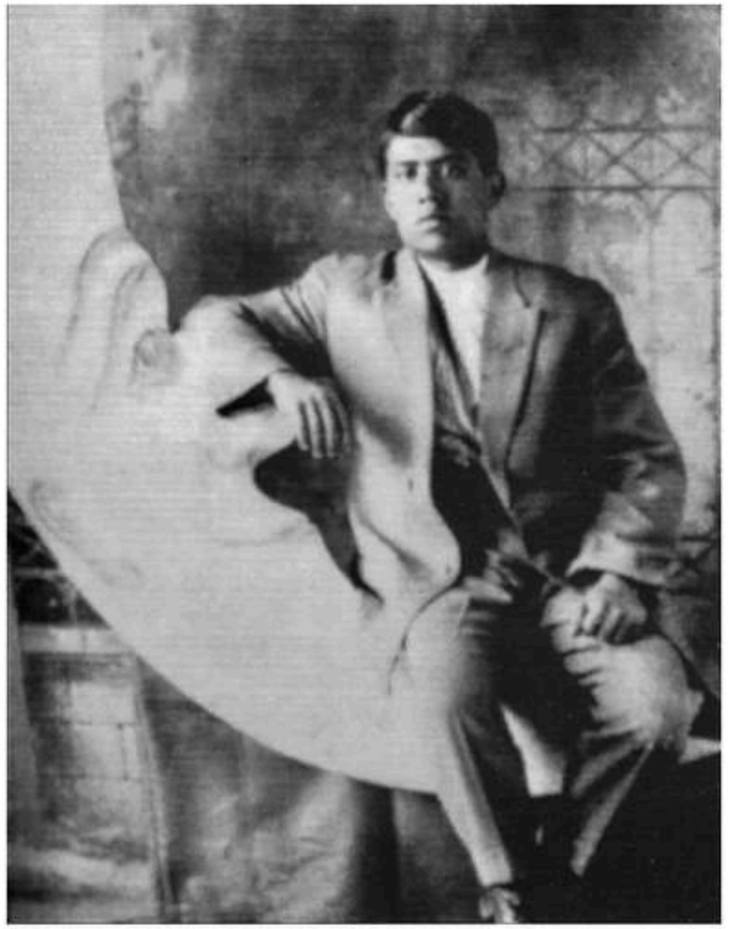
The Mexican village, peopled by men, women and children who are more recent arrivals from the republic below the Rio Grande, presents the first dip in the melting pot, for these adopted citizens.

The customs of Old Mexico are followed there. One can hear the songs of rancho and hiacienda; the tones of the guitar sound through the village in the evening. Occasionally a voice in gutteral Spanish is added to the din.

But while the village retains the prettier and more romantic customs of Old Mexico, it likewise retains the less romantic. One of these customs is the keeping of swine in some instances in the homes or adjacent to the dwelling places of the villagers.

Many of the villagers of years ago are now well respected citizens of Fort Madison and occupying fine homes. This transition could be made more rapid if an effort was made in the city to train these new citizens in the customs of the country, during the earlier periods of their residence.

Augustine Lozano's family migrated from Mexico to the US in 1911. In Fort Madison, he lived on Avenue P. A 1929 record indicated he operated the "Augustine Grocery Store." His brother Alfredo was employed by the Santa Fe. A 1949 record indicated Alfredo operated "The Village Tavern."



1920s: The Dario and Anastasia Ruiz family, children Carlos, Elenor, Ralph, Salvador in Fort Madison. During the Mexican Fiesta, they set up a stand in their yard at 3438 Avenue Q and sold "homemade food."





March 8, 1923: "MEXICANS MAKE PLANS FOR BIG FIESTA IN CITY ... Local Mexican Colony Making Plans for Big Easter Celebration at School ... The day will begin with special services at the little chapel at Sacred Heart school, after which a series of gala events will transform the Calle del Porta (should be *Calle de la Puerta*- street of the gate) into a scene of carnival."



MEXICANS MAKE PLANS FOR BIG FIESTA IN CITY

Local Mexican Colony Making Plans for Big Easter Celebration at School.

The inhabitants of the local Mexican colony are completing plans, through a committee, for a huge Easter fiesta, which will be held in very much the same manner as the holiday is celebrated in Old Mexico.

The day will begin with special services at the little chapel at the Sacred Heart school, after which a series of gala events will transform the Calle del Porta into a scene of carnival. A huge dinner of native dishes will be the main event of the day and already orders have been sent to the mother country for ingredients which are not to be had here.

The residents of the Mexican village are looking forward to the affair with much interest.

Try PISO'S
Astonishingly quick relief. A syrup—different from all others—pleasant—no upset stomach—no opiates. 35c and 60c everywhere.
Prescription

November 8, 1923: “FIRE THREATHENS MEXICAN VILLAGE; TWO HOMES BURN ... A fire, after destroying two homes, damaging another and threatening to wipe out a large section of the Mexican village, was halted yesterday afternoon only by the prompt actions of the Santa Fe fire department ... Both homes were totally destroyed but the value of the houses and the contents destroyed could not be ascertained today. Neither were covered by insurance.”



FIRE THREATENS MEXICAN VILLAGE; TWO HOMES BURN

Only Through Prompt Action Is Large Section of Village Saved —Cause Unknown.

A fire, after destroying two homes, damaging another and threatening to wipe out a large section of the Mexican village, was halted yesterday afternoon only by the prompt action of the Santa Fe fire department.

Shortly after 2:30 yesterday afternoon the firemen were called to the village located south of the old Ryan house. Two homes were ablaze and the flames were threatening to spread to other buildings. Houses in this section are huddled closely together and only by rapid work were the firemen able to save other homes from going up in smoke.

The exact cause of the fire is unknown, although it is believed that the conflagration resulted after a cookstove in one of the homes destroyed had become overheated and had ignited a loose strip of wall paper.

Both homes were totally destroyed but the value of the houses and the contents destroyed could not be ascertained today. Neither, it is understood, were covered by insurance.

September 15, 1926: “MEXICANS HERE HOLD FIESTA AT THEIR VILLAGE ... Wednesday and Thursday Set Aside for Independence Celebration ... Dancing will be one of the principal amusements. Everyone in the city is invited ... City officials have been invited to attend the events ... and those sponsoring the affair say a representative of the Santa Fe from Topeka will also be here ... Mexicans from Burlington and Keokuk will be here for the celebration and several hundred people are expected ...”



MEXICANS HERE HOLD FIESTA AT THEIR VILLAGE

Wednesday and Thursday Set Aside for Independence Celebration.

Wednesday and Thursday nights will be big events in the Mexican village at which time an independence celebration will be staked. The celebration will be held on a lot west of the Santa Fe car department. On Wednesday night the Fort Madison band is scheduled to furnish the music and on Thursday night the Keokuk band will play. Dancing will be one of the principal amusements. Every one in the city is invited to enjoy the Mexican Independence festivities.

City officials have been invited to attend the events Wednesday and Thursday nights, and those sponsoring the affair say a representative of the Santa Fe from Topeka will also be here.

It is said the program of events will start at 7 o'clock each evening and will continue until around midnight or 1 o'clock in the morning. Lots of eats, cooked in Mexican style, will be available.

Independence day has been observed by Mexican people since 1810. Mexicans from Burlington and Keokuk will be here for the celebration and several hundred people are expected to be on the grounds enjoying the various events that have been planned.

Mrs. Wayland Miller and baby of Chicago are visiting relatives and friends here.

Gregorio Diaz with his car and his father (Claro Diaz), sister (Josefa Puga, in the car), nephew (Pedro Diaz) and nieces (Ramona Diaz, Maria Puga, and Seferina Puga). Photo taken in the 38th Street neighborhood where they moved after the flooding forced them and other families out of *El Cometa*.



Young girl poses with bicycle, most likely at *El Cometa*. Note railroad ties in background.



Family poses with bicycle in railyard with freight cars in background. Most likely *El Cometa*.



September 16, 1926: “Mexican Village Houses Flooded by Excessive Rains … Housewives Walk about Rooms on Planks to Keep Dry – Children Play on Plank Bridges-Health Conditions Are Bad. Twenty-five to thirty houses in the Mexican village, housing from 150 to 200 people have been invaded by water which covers the low land in which the Mexican village (*Istafiate*) is located … In one kitchen the cook stove stood in the water which came almost to the oven … Several homes have been abandoned while the people who had been residing in the deserted houses have taken refuge in some bunk cars … As one enters the various houses the small of stagnant water is noticeable. It is these quarters where Mexican people eat and sleep. Children venturing out to play in some cases compelled because of conditions to confine their play activities to the planks used to bridge the wide expanse of water … Regardless of the conditions, people seem to be happy,. They laugh about the high water when they are asked.


Mexican Village
Houses Flooded by
Excessive Rains

October 7, 1926: “Death Knell Of The Mexican Village Sounded By Rain ... Special Agent Hammond of Topeka Orders Mexicans Families to Vacate Water Soaked Hallow for New Residences ... The Mexican village in the Santa Fe yards has been drowned out and the knell of the picturesque foreign settlement in Fort Madison has been sounded by the Santa Fe railroad company ... The families affected by the order include more than half a hundred, the heads ... are employed in mechanical work about Shopton by the railroad company ... The families are unwilling to leave the settlement ...



Death Knell Of The Mexican Village Here Sounded by the Rains

Special Agent Hammond of Topeka Orders Mexican Families to Vacate Water Soaked Hollow for New Residences.

TWO BICYCLES ARE STOLEN AT GRAMMAR SCHOOL ON WEDNESDAY

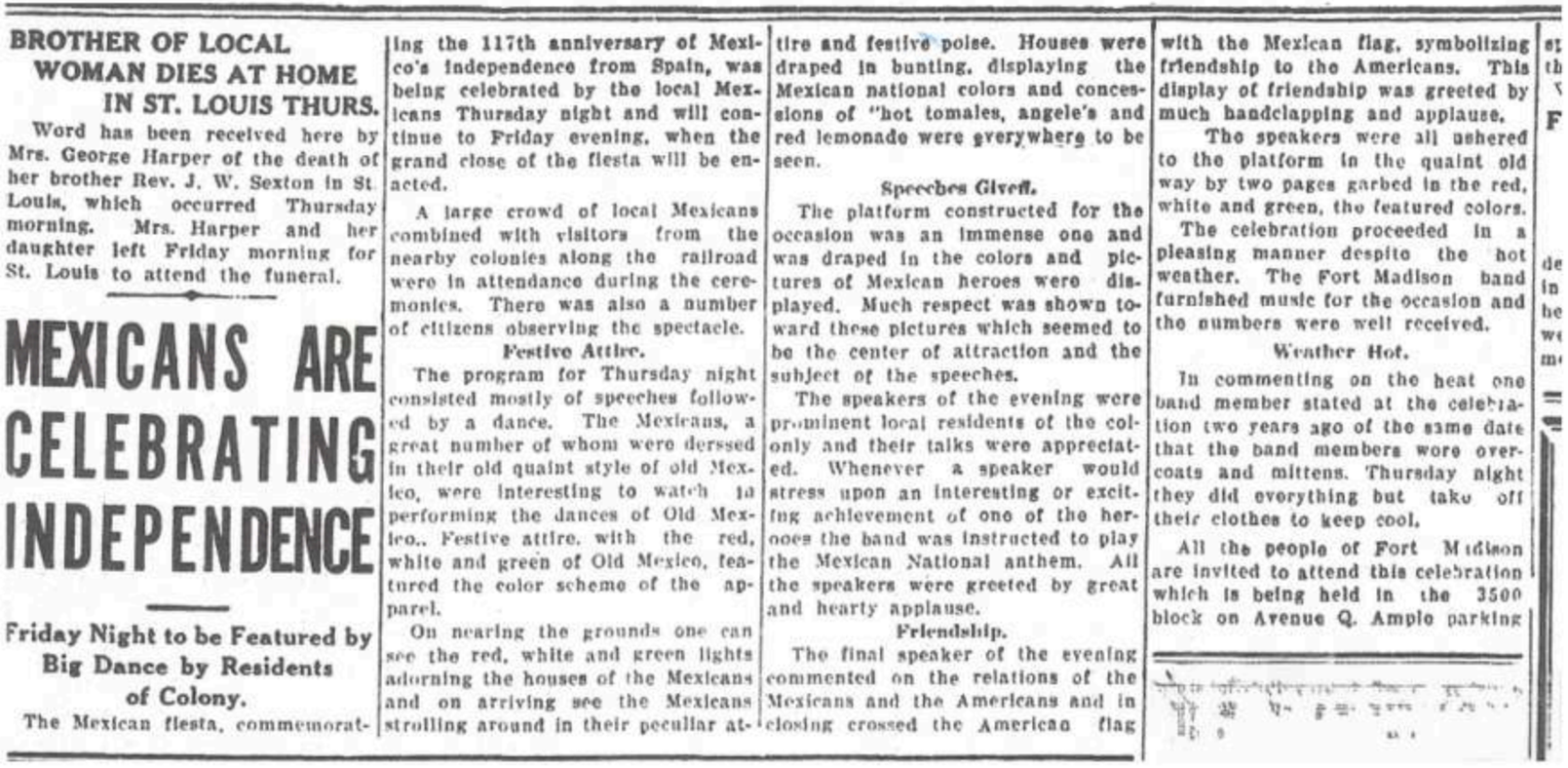
FORD SEDAN STOLEN IN BURLINGTON ON TUESDAY EVENING

FOURTH SPAN OF NEW BRIDGE IS STARTED AND GOING RAPIDLY

Fidel Alvarez walking through flood waters at *El Cometa*.



September 16, 1927: "MEXICANS ARE CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE ... The Mexican fiesta, commemorating the 117th anniversary of Mexican Independence from Spain was being celebrated by the local Mexicans ... making it the large crowd of local Mexicans combined with visitors from the nearby colonies along the railroad were in attendance during the ceremonies." Mexico won its independence in 1821, making it the 106th anniversary, not 117th. (The war started 117 years prior).



BROTHER OF LOCAL WOMAN DIES AT HOME IN ST. LOUIS THURS.

Word has been received here by Mrs. George Harper of the death of her brother Rev. J. W. Sexton in St Louis, which occurred Thursday morning. Mrs. Harper and her daughter left Friday morning for St. Louis to attend the funeral.

MEXICANS ARE CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE

Friday Night to be Featured by Big Dance by Residents of Colony.

The Mexican fiesta, commemorating the 117th anniversary of Mexico's independence from Spain, was being celebrated by the local Mexicans Thursday night and will continue to Friday evening, when the grand close of the fiesta will be enacted.

A large crowd of local Mexicans combined with visitors from the nearby colonies along the railroad were in attendance during the ceremonies. There was also a number of citizens observing the spectacle.

Festive Attire.

The program for Thursday night consisted mostly of speeches followed by a dance. The Mexicans, a great number of whom were dressed in their old quaint style of old Mexico, were interesting to watch in performing the dances of Old Mexico.. Festive attire, with the red, white and green of Old Mexico, featured the color scheme of the apparel.

On nearing the grounds one can see the red, white and green lights adorning the houses of the Mexicans and on arriving see the Mexicans strolling around in their peculiar attire and festive poise. Houses were draped in bunting, displaying the Mexican national colors and concessions of "hot tomales, angele's and red lemonade were everywhere to be seen.

Speeches Given.

The platform constructed for the occasion was an immense one and was draped in the colors and pictures of Mexican heroes were displayed. Much respect was shown toward these pictures which seemed to be the center of attraction and the subject of the speeches.

The speakers of the evening were prominent local residents of the colonly and their talks were appreciated. Whenever a speaker would stress upon an interesting or exciting achievement of one of the heroes the band was instructed to play the Mexican National anthem. All the speakers were greeted by great and hearty applause.

Friendship.

The final speaker of the evening commented on the relations of the Mexicans and the Americans and in closing crossed the American flag with the Mexican flag, symbolizing friendship to the Americans. This display of friendship was greeted by much handclapping and applause.

The speakers were all ushered to the platform in the quaint old way by two pages garbed in the red, white and green, the featured colors.

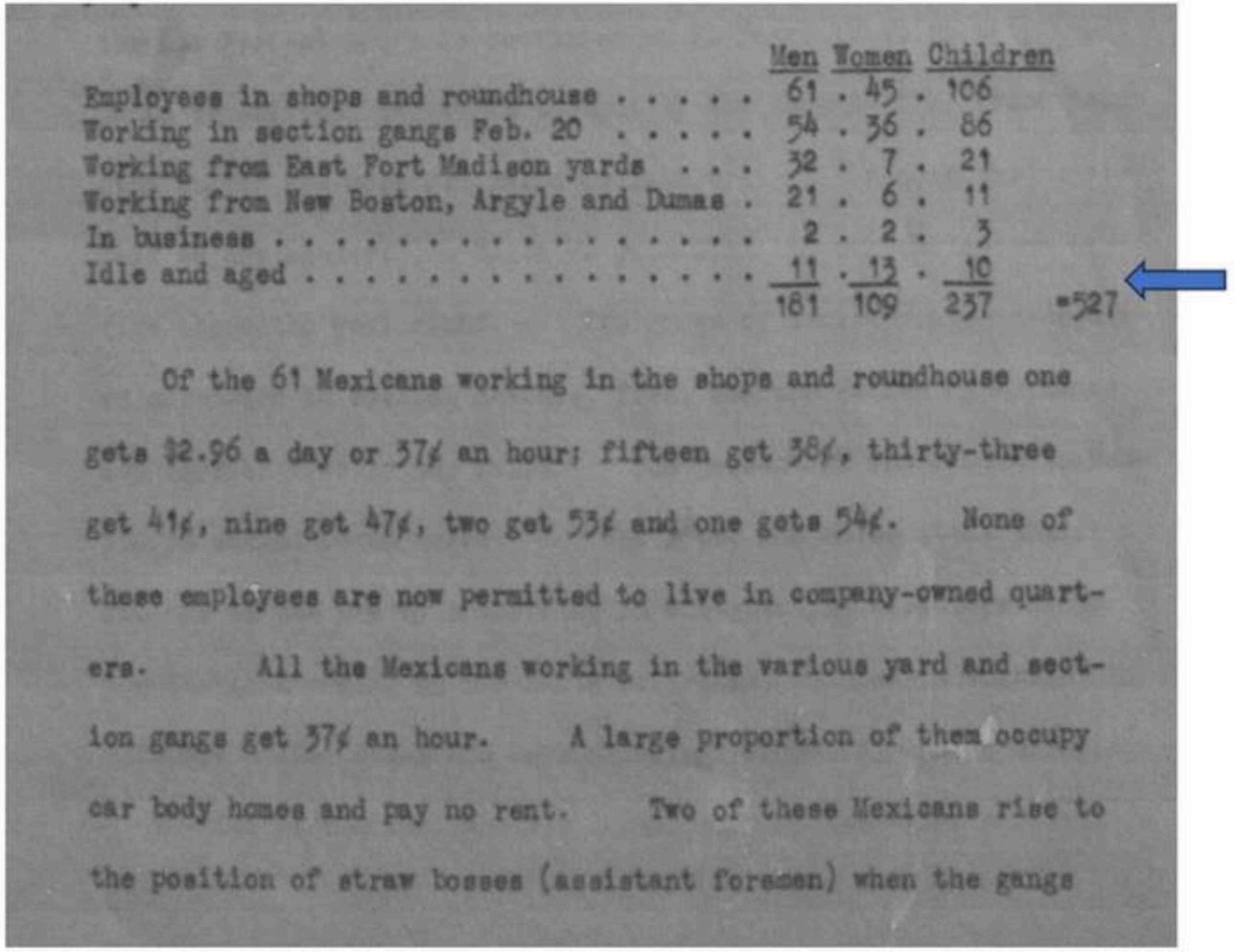
The celebration proceeded in a pleasing manner despite the hot weather. The Fort Madison band furnished music for the occasion and the numbers were well received.

Weather Hot.

In commenting on the heat one band member stated at the celebration two years ago of the same date that the band members wore overcoats and mittens. Thursday night they did everything but take off their clothes to keep cool.

All the people of Fort Madison are invited to attend this celebration which is being held in the 3500 block on Avenue Q. Ample parking

1927: US Department of Labor, Bureaus of Labor Statistics report titled “Mexicans at Fort Madison, IA.” by George Edson, Field Investigator. Population: 527. 161 men, 109 women, 237 children.



	Men	Women	Children	
Employees in shops and roundhouse	61	45	106	
Working in section gangs Feb. 20	54	36	86	
Working from East Fort Madison yards	32	7	21	
Working from New Boston, Argyle and Dumas	21	6	11	
In business	2	2	3	
Idle and aged	11	13	10	
	181	109	237	=527

Of the 61 Mexicans working in the shops and roundhouse one gets $2.96 a day or 37¢ an hour; fifteen get 38¢, thirty-three get 41¢, nine get 47¢, two get 53¢ and one gets 54¢. None of these employees are now permitted to live in company-owned quarters. All the Mexicans working in the various yard and section gangs get 37¢ an hour. A large proportion of them occupy car body homes and pay no rent. Two of these Mexicans rise to the position of straw bosses (assistant foremen) when the gangs

- The Mexican population in Fort Madison reached its peak in 1922 and 1923.
- Mrs. Duffy, who spoke Spanish, took the 1925 census and claimed there were 800 Mexicans, of which 105 attended school. In 1927, the population decreased to 500, with about 75 children in school.
- Two years earlier, “The Mexican colony here has acquired a tough reputation.”
- “Gamblers and toughs of the same nationality drifted in here to live off the

  working Mexicans … after a few killings of the tough birds the colony managed to rid itself of the scum. The chief of police and sheriff were rather lenient to a Mexican who killed a crook, as this made the neighborhood safer for officers.”

John Edson, 1927 US Labor Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics report on Fort Madison Mexican Village.

- “It was said to have been a wonderful sight to behold—old boxcars set on the ground, shanties, dog huts, chicken sheds, porched, fences, gardens and other things they fabricated, with narrow lanes and little shops, ‘blind pigs” (illicit drinking establishment), dance hall, motion picture theater, and eating places and chickens, pigs, goats and dogs--a place where few outsiders ventured.”
- “In the fall of 1926 it rained heavily... Water mains failed... Water filled the lanes and gardens and stood ankle-deep in the dwellings. But this didn’t drive the Mexicans out. They got old railroad ties, boxes, bricks, and planks, and they made walkways in and out and around, and they continued to live and eat and sleep in inundated homes. The children got sick. It was a marvel to the Americans to see these people staying there. Something had to be done, as winter would freeze the water and prevent the doors from opening or closing. The railroad notified the Mexicans it needed the ground, and it gave them until November 1 to get out and find homes.”

- The woman residents of the adjoining property, assenting that a deal was in the air, formed a mob and went to the parley (meeting). There, they emphatically informed the landowner that if he sold to the Mexicans to build homes there, they would stone them put or burn their houses. The owner then suggested that a price restriction could be put on each lot. But the Mexicans were frightened at the attitude of the neighbors and declined further consideration.
- About that time, a few shrewd men were ready to submit another proposition. They had asserted that a number of Mexicans had savings accounts, some running as high as $500 and a number over $100, in certain banks (Fort Madison Savings Bank and Santa Fe Avenue Savings bank), even though they frequently sent money to Mexico.
- The S&JC Altee Lumber Co. lumber dealers owned an entire block at the extreme southwest corner of the city (block 16 in Fairview addition). They made a deal with Jesus Reynosa whereby they sold him the block for $2,100 cash. There were 21 lots of 25-foot frontage (wide). Reynosa made agreements with other Mexicans to transfer lots to them. Then, the Altee company made a contract with Reynosa whereby they would furnish the lumber to build, still holding the deed to the land as security. A building contractor was hired to help the Mexicans build.

- The result was that in a few weeks, a cow pasture was made into a little town, with rows of framed houses, some of which are attractive. Some were built by professional carpenters but about half were built by the Mexicans, who bought a lot of old material from the abandoned village (railroad Mexican village).
- The WA Schere insurance was asked to provide insurance on the houses; it was declined because several houses had stovepipe chimneys standing between those with brick chimneys. Thirty Mexicans are thus on the way to become property owners. And thereby acquire the title of *Don.*
- Under the leadership of Benito Sandoval, Mexicans are buying property elsewhere, all but a stone's throw of the Burlington railroad tracks between 20th and 35th street. Don Benito erected a store building at 2306 Avenue N, south of the Burlington tracks, and near him are five or six houses built by his relatives (of whom he had 30).
- Anastacio [Razo] bought a lot on Union Ave. for $175 and built a house that cost $800.
- Luis Servin is paying close to $1,000 for his home.
- Santiago Salazar, Antonio Diaz and Victor Amador are home-owners.
- Brigido Lopez is the only track worker buying a home, others are lending money to relatives.

- Brothers Luis and Jesus Pavon bought adjoining lots and built a story-and-a-half double house, the partition being exactly on the property line.
- The Altee lumber company would not do business with miscellaneous individuals and are holding Reynosa responsible for everything. Those who bought lots and built houses are paying Reynosa from $10 to $50 a month, and he pays Altee. In a few cases, the men are paying Altee directly. Practically all the Mexicans are keeping up their payments.
- Ysobelo Hidalgo, who earned 47 cents an hour, owns an automobile and dresses his family well, is defaulting on his payment and not reporting regularly to work at the shops. No Mexican can receive a deed until the whole is paid. Altee has a contract with Reynosa to give him a deed when all money is paid in, and Reynosa has several verbal agreements with the other Mexicans in his group.
- Mrs. Duffy says that Reynosa is a crook and that disaster is sure to overtake this venture. The Altee people believe he is an honest man.
- Payments made for property makes Mexicans poor prospects for peddlers, yet here as everywhere there are plenty of clothing agents and gee-gaw (small showy inexpensive decorative item or jewelry) sellers and other grifters (swindler).

- Mexicans have five businesses. Three stores---JJ Reynosa, Manuel Salazar and Silvestre [Olaque]---are in the Fairview neighborhood, Benito Sandoval has a grocery store and meat market at 23rd and N and Augustine Lozano runs a pool hall on Shawnee street. Reynosa has a telephone at his store. All these businesses have flowered within the past few months, since the hegira (exodus made to escape a dangerous place) from the swamp (in Santa Fe yard). Mrs. Duffy predicts all will fail.

  Mexican children attend the West End school mostly (Most likely Sacred Heart School in the west end of Fort Madison. Mexican children are all Catholic, although few attend services in a language they cannot understand, they all confer with the priest of the west and church on matters of ceremony. They have been taught prayers and catechisms as children and if a Mexican can write his own name, he can repeat any prayer on occasion.

  Many are buried in the consecrated ground of the Scared Heart church cemetery, and one had a $50 stone on his grave. Those whom Lee county has buried were sent to the “potters’ field,” but Mexicans avoid this happening.

- Collections are taken for burial expenses, which costs $150 or $175, and a dead man's debts are paid, by his friends, if the family cannot pay. Even a Mexican whom nobody loved usually gets a good collection when the hat is passed, as these people dread a violation of their religious beliefs.
- Few Mexican families are now renters in Fort Madison, as a larger number occupy boxcars rent-free, live in company (Santa Fe) flats at $1 or $2 a family or else are buying houses. Others pay $10, one family pays $15 and another $20, but none more then $20.
- Usually, a home contained a middle-aged couple and two or more of their married sons and daughters and all of their children, unmarried brothers and cousins. The Mexican likes to have his folks all close together.
- Two or three Mexicans are married to "white" women, and two have sworn to love, cherish and obey negro women until death do them part. But one colored marriage broke up in a fight, and the other one seems to be still carrying on. An American man named Brown espoused a Mexican girl and is apparently living happily ever after.

- The Santa Fe *Istafiate* Mexican compound was full; rent was $1.00 a room per month. The company (Santa Fe) didn't want to build any more places for Mexican to live."
- "So Mexicans had to do something ... Someone suggested that they buy land and build ... They appealed to Benita, their fairy godmother, their advisor and consoler and friend. Benita is Mrs. W. E. Duffy, who runs a grocerteria store at 3222 L Street, near the Mexican settlement.
- They [Mexicans)came to her for everything - - to call the doctor, priest or undertaker, to arrange for births, marriages and funerals. To talk to lawyers, bankers, and policemen - - in fact, they come to her like children who have pinched their fingers or Willie (nervousness)has hit him."
- Benita Duffy contacted the real estate dealer to help. A man named Jesus J. Reynosa was the spokesman and leader of a "delegation of 76 Mexicans." He spoke English and was married to an American women.
- The group found a man who would sell them a plot of ground about two blocks in size, surrounded by the homes of other people.

September 14, 1928: Mexican Celebration. “The platform is now erected.”



Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 14, 1928

mexican celebration

MEXICAN CELEBRATION WILL BE HELD SATURDAY, SUNDAY NIGHTS

Saturday and Sunday have been selected as the dates for the Mexican celebration this year. The event will start Saturday night and will continue Sunday afternoon and evening. Those sponsoring the affair say the celebration will continue well past midnight each night.

The celebration will be held at 211 Avenue Q, which is four blocks south of the Santa Fe hospital. Mexican dishes will be served and Mexican dances will be featured in the entertainment for the event. It is stressed there will be dancing for every one and it is hoped there will be a good crowd to enjoy it.

The committee in charge of the celebration extends a most cordial invitation to every one to attend the affair both nights as well as Sunday afternoon. The platform is now erected and by Saturday evening everything will be in readiness.

The Mexican celebration attracted large crowds every year.

served. The time passed only too quickly in pleasant conversation for the older folks and various games for the youngsters.

Those present for this enjoyable occasion were Mr. and Mrs. Harry Rings and son Richard of Chicago, Seymour Rings of Kansas City, Robert Krehbiel, Mrs. Anna Rings and son Herbert and daughter Leota, Mr. and Mrs. Sherman Miner and sons Kenneth, Willis and Raymond, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Wilhelm and daughter Larbie, Mr. and Mrs. Art Rings and daughter Edith and sons Olin, Dale and Paul.

MONTROSE.

Members of the Library association will hold a meeting Tuesday afternoon at [illegible]. Business of importance will be transacted. All persons who have books to donate from their family library are asked to bring them at this time. The inter-

September 1928: Mexican Fiesta ends and the corner of Avenue Q and 35th street. "Hundreds of People View Interesting Dances and Different Activities ... Patriotism for America and Mexico was the general trend ..." The Mexican baseball team defeated the Fort Madison Midgets by a 4 to 2 score.



Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 17, 1928

MEXICANS WIND UP ACTIVITIES SUNDAY NIGHT

Hundreds of People View Interesting Dances and Different Activities.

Commemorating the anniversary of their independence from Spain, local Mexicans celebrated for 2 days in one of the most unique events ever witnessed by the people of this vicinity. The celebration was brought to a close Sunday night, following the dance program, which brought forth the quaint old Spanish dances executed in perfect rythm by the local senoritas and senors.

The grand opening of the event was Saturday night at 8 o'clock when the parade formed at the lower village and marched to the scene of the celebration, which was at the corner of Avenue Q and 35th street. Red, white and green together with the bunting of the United States was resplendent in the evening lights as the different exercises of the Independence celebration took place.

Patriotism for America and also for Mexico was the general trend of the exercises marked by the final clasping and wave of the American flag with that of the Mexican Republic.

Hundreds of local people journeyed to the scene of the celebration both Saturday and Sunday and watched the native dances and other native exercises. It was an interesting scene and the event is celebrated once each year and it is much the same as the Fourth of July is to citizens of the United States.

As a part of the celebration the Mexican baseball nine defeated the Fort Madison Midgets by a 4 to 2 score Sunday afternoon.

just experience and one that marks the end of a full decade of unbroken annual increases in mortality from this disorder. These facts are disclosed in a statistical report made public here by the state department of public health. The report pointed out that heart disease and nephritis now surpass cancer as a cause of death and that cancer attacks people at a lower general age level than does either of the others.

"In spite of research work, probably unsurpassed in magnitude in the whole history of scientific medicine," Dr. Rawlings, state health director, said, "the death rate from cancer manifested a disheartening vigor last year when it climbed from 104 to 106 per 100,000 people in Illinois, and experience probably general throughout the country. Not a single county, city or village in the state escaped the blighting influence of this unwelcomed visitor although the rural people fared better with a rate of 91.5 than did their city cousins where the rate was 114.2. Rates varied from 42 in Forest Park to 304 in Jacksonville where a number of state institutions are located.

"This uninterrupted rise in mortality from cancer shows clearly that so far no reliable curative system with which to combat the disease has been discovered. Once cancer becomes well established in the body the condition is serious. Radium and the knife have yielded more satisfactory results than anything else.

"Prevention offers the most encouraging prospects in respect to cancer. This disorder is more or less a group of body cells which have embarked on a wild and lawless career of growth. Some sort of irritation incites the cells to elect this course. Detected early before they have spread the riot spirit among too large an area of cells the uprising can be quelled just like police can nip a mob violence in the bud."

Courage of the patient and skill by the doctor are the two essential factors in preventing cancerous conditions from growing into an incurable state.

The death rate among women from this disease is greater than among men, although the rate among men is increasing more rapidly than it is among women.

Fort Madison *Las Agilas Mexicanas* baseball team formed in 1928.



SHOPTON MEXICAN EAGLES

Here they are, folks. A real Mexican team. This team is composed of young, ambitious ball pl
who have established a name for themselves by defeating some of the be ams in this part of the state.
Up to date the Eagles have an excellent record of seventeen wins and defeats The personne
the team is, left to right, front row—Francisco Martinez, 2b.; Alberto Mar ; Manuel Reyes, c.f.;
Pavon, p.; Gabino Juarez, 1b. and captain. Rear row—Pedro Martinez, b and manager; Clau Ramire
Any team interested in scheduling games for next year should write Se

Fort Madison *Las Agilas Mexicanas* baseball team.



Courtesy photo

Pictured above are members of the Mexican Eagles, a baseball team from Fort Madison that may be the subject of a feature film, "Fort Madison Diamond Boys." This photo was submitted by Sebastian Alvarez, one of the surviving members of the team that was formed in 1928. Pictured from left to right are: Pedro Martinez, Jose Aguilar, Frank Becerra, Felipe Cangas, Eliovardo Pavon, Sebastian Alvarez, Jose Vera, Locadio Lopez, Lusito Pavon, Alberto Martinez, Luis Salazar, and Regino Rangel.

Las Aguilas Mexicana baseball team



September 1929: Mexican Fiesta on Avenue Q in the Mexican Village. The country club orchestra played and there was a baseball game at the “Mexican field” between the Mexican Eagles and Fort Madison Moose baseball clubs. The event was sponsored by 75 Mexican families and more than 30 unmarried Mexican residents in Fort Madison.

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 13, 1929

MEXICANS WILL HOLD FIESTA IN WEST END 2 DAYS

Baseball, Program, Singing Will Mark Observation of Mexican Independence.

A two-day celebration will be held here on Sunday and Monday by the hundreds of Mexicans who live in this city. The fiesta is in honor of the 119th anniversary of their independence from Spain. These days will be observed by Mexicans all over the world and the observance is similar to the Independence day that is celebrated in America on July 4.

The fiesta will open with a baseball game in the Mexican Eagles park at 3 p. m. The game will be played between the Mexican Eagles and the Burlington Whippets, two of

Lost Artic Cause T To Car C

The lost and fou which is maintained Madison Street railw of grief to the local t but is a big aid to h singers every year, company stated Frid

The articles are t singers and employe pany and include furs to candy. Mos are called for identi ed to their owners ev announced. Although missing articles com for months.

It is not unusual complain that he lo the car—in fact a vehemently assert tha it there—and upbra and employes of the pany because they d and then find later th that particular purs shoes on the car at

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 13, 1929



CONRAD PETERSON.

d th stomach trouble years. My appetite fell off undernourished weak, and my was poor. I was nearly constipated and bilious, and es and dizzy spells worried most continually. I was ner- d irritable, and my sleep was and broken. My strength ergy were far below what they to have been appetite came right back started Sargon and in a short

the fastest juvenile baseball team in southeastern Iowa.

At 8 o'clock Sunday night a [illegible] will be held on Ave- nue Q in the Mexican village. A band will take part in the march. A platform has been erected on Ave- nue Q at 24th street and speeches will be made following the march between 23rd and 25th streets on Avenue Q.

[illegible] program of speeches [illegible] the band will play [illegible] until 12 o'clock. The dancing [illegible] the platform [illegible] on streets.

On Monday there will be another baseball game on the Mexican field by the Mexican Eagles and the Fort Madison Moose baseball clubs.

On Monday evening the Country club orchestra will play and there will again be dancing on the plat- [illegible] at 12.

During the two-day celebration Mexican food will be eaten. Mexican housewives have been busy all week preparing favorite Mexican dishes.

The celebration is sponsored by the 75 Mexican families and the more than 30 unmarried Mexican residents of Fort Madison.

September 15-16.1929 *"La Junta Patriotica"* (Patriotic Committee) sponsored a *Fiestas Patria* celebration in Fort Madison on Avenue Q. The 1810 date on the bell signifies *El Grito de Delores* and start of the Mexican Independence War. On the 15th, *Las Aguilas Mexicans* baseball team was to play the Burlington Whippets. Next day, the Mexican team was to play against the Fort Madison Moose.





Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 16, 1929

Monday, September 16, 1929.

MEXICAN FIESTA WELL ATTENDED ON FIRST NIGHT

Rain Arrives Shortly Before End of First Night of Big Celebration.

The first day of the two-day celebration being held by the Mexican residents of Fort Madison in honor of the 119th anniversary of Mexico's independence from Spain got off with a bang Sunday afternoon and continued until after 11 o'clock Sunday night when rain halted the fiesta that was to have continued until midnight.

Opens With Baseball.

The celebration opened with a baseball game at the Mexican Eagles ball park Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock when the Mexican Eagles were defeated by the juvenile team from Burlington known as the Whippets.

At 8 o'clock a parade was held on Avenue Q after which there were speeches and singing on a special platform built at Avenue Q and 35th street. After this program had been completed, there was dancing on the platform.

The Fort Madison school band, under the direction of Adrian Schroeder, furnished the music for the Mexican celebration Sunday, also playing for dancing Sunday evening. The band led the parade.

Their "July 4."

This is one of the biggest holidays of the year for Mexicans all over the world just as the Fourth of July is a celebration by all Americans everywhere.

for this holiday for many weeks and all their favorite foods are prepared.

Nearly 1,000 other Fort Madison residents visited the scene of festivities during the afternoon and evening in addition to the several hundred Mexicans who live here and who took part.

The fiesta was scheduled to continue all day Monday, with a baseball game in the Mexican Eagles park between the Mexican Eagles nine and the Moose club team of this city at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The Country club orchestra was to play at the specially built platform Monday evening where dancing was to be the principal means of entertainment. The celebration was to end at mid-night Monday.

SLOW WEEK ENDS WITH BIG NIGHT FOR OFFICERS

Police Complete Quiet Week With Big Night of Activity Here Saturday.

Fort Madison police had collected $[illegible] in fines from Saturday night to Monday morning as a result of a "week of business" which followed one of the quietest weeks that has visited the local police department for months.

Two men, John Patterson and Orville Pate paid fines of $[illegible] in police court Monday for their appearance after the week had been quiet. Sunday for their appearance in court on the charge of [illegible]

Three other men were in the city with Patterson and Pate subsequent

Maintaining Mexican culture with music in the early 1930s outside *El Istafiate* housing settlement. Pompeyo Ramirez's Mexican band. Left: Frank Martinez, Dionicio Munoz, Ladisdo Prado, Rodolfo Pavon, Felipe Cangas, Vicente Gracia (no named for the other members).



“Maestro Pompeyo” (1937) and wife Fernanda Rameriz (RJ Hernandez)

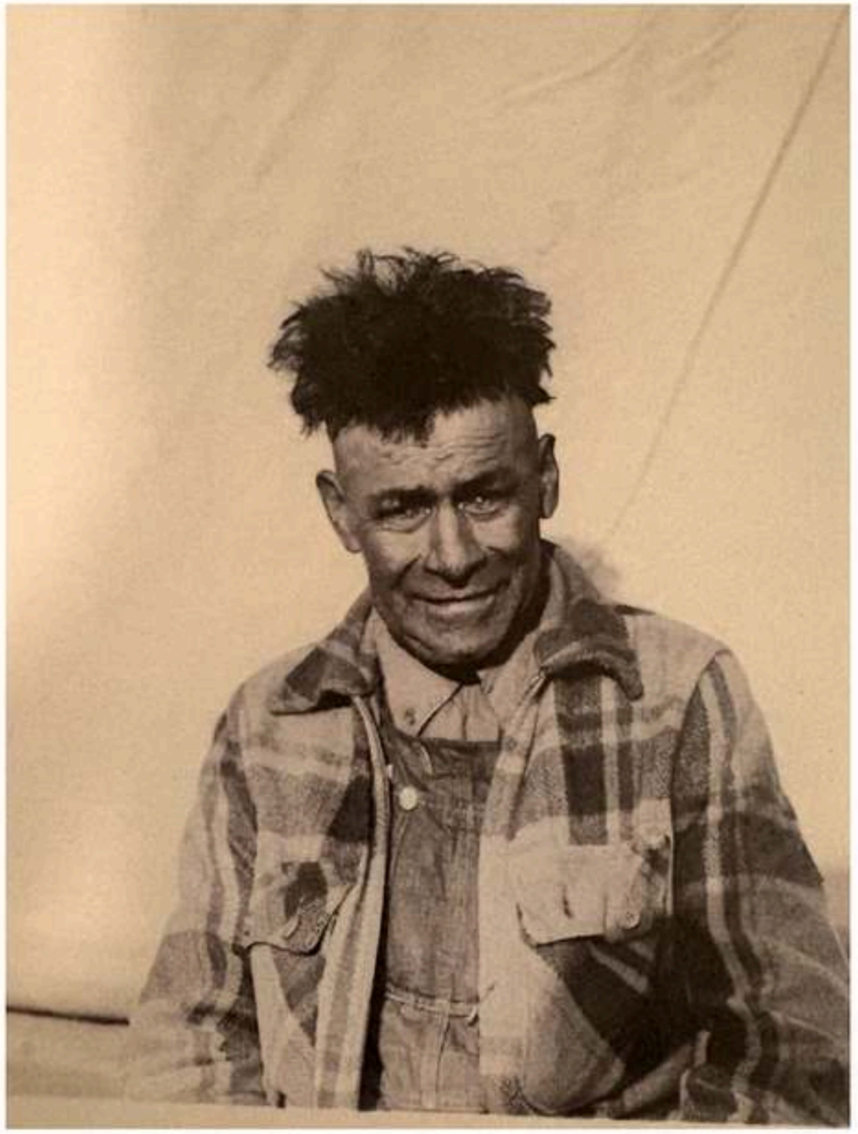




Banda Mexicana de Fort Madison, Iowa, at Santa Fe *El Istafiate* “Mexican compound.”



“Pete Loco.”



Just as there was life at the Fort Madison Village, there was death. The Santa Fe Hospital in Fort Madison is where many people from the Mexican boxcar camps and Village died.



Summary of 169 death certificates from the first in 1905 to 1929.

Of 169 Death Certificates: Males: 128 (76%); Females: 41 (24%)

- Death under 1 year of age: Males: 23; Females: 16
- Death between 1-18 years of age: Males: 12; Females: 11
- Death over 18 years of age: Males: 87 (+6 adult age unknown) Females: 14
- Average age at death: Males: 24; Females: 15

Causes of death:

***Illnesses:** 138 (81%)- pneumonia related=38 (48%); tuberculosis related=31(39%); diarrhea related=5 (6%); cholera=3 (4%); typhoid fever=2 (3%).

* Associated with confined, unsanitary housing. Toxic railyard environment contribution.

Railroad related: 20 (12%)

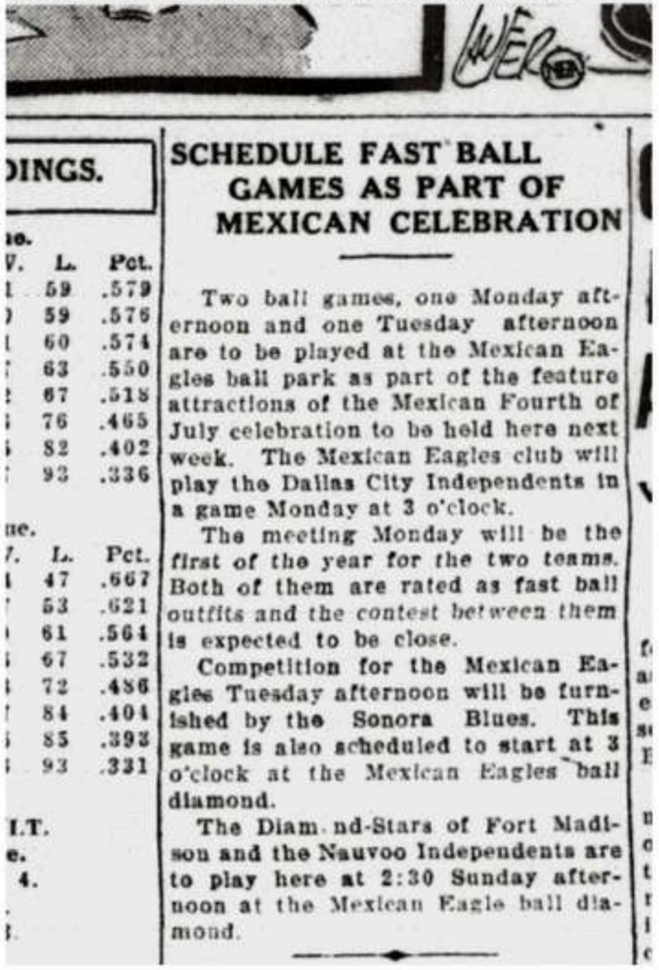
Gunshot: 10 (6%)-(1905-1910=6 (60%); (1911-1929=4 (40%)

Drown: 1 (0.6%)

- **Unknown information on relatives:** 70 (41%)

Lives Continue September 1930: Fast ball baseball game between *Las Aguilas Mexicanas* and Dallas City Independents at the Mexican Fiesta.

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 13, 1930



DINGS.

	W.	L.	Pct.
ue.			
	59		.579
	59		.576
	60		.574
	63		.550
	67		.518
	76		.465
	82		.402
	93		.336

	W.	L.	Pct.
ue.			
	47		.667
	53		.621
	61		.564
	67		.532
	72		.486
	84		.404
	85		.393
	93		.331

I.T.
e.
4.

SCHEDULE FAST BALL GAMES AS PART OF MEXICAN CELEBRATION

Two ball games, one Monday afternoon and one Tuesday afternoon are to be played at the Mexican Eagles ball park as part of the feature attractions of the Mexican Fourth of July celebration to be held here next week. The Mexican Eagles club will play the Dallas City Independents in a game Monday at 3 o'clock.

The meeting Monday will be the first of the year for the two teams. Both of them are rated as fast ball outfits and the contest between them is expected to be close.

Competition for the Mexican Eagles Tuesday afternoon will be furnished by the Sonora Blues. This game is also scheduled to start at 3 o'clock at the Mexican Eagles ball diamond.

The Diamond-Stars of Fort Madison and the Nauvoo Independents are to play here at 2:30 Sunday afternoon at the Mexican Eagle ball diamond.

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 16, 1930



THE EVENING DEMOCRAT, FORT MA

D THIEVES
ESTED FOR
BING FIRMS

Securities as They were livered at Bank and Brokerage Offices.

YORK, (UP).—Accused of of more than a $1,000,000 from New York banks and five members of a gang the police lineup Tuesday. uring more like prosperous men than thieves, the men dignant at the scrutiny of nd detectives. They were Borden, 28, alleged leader of Harry Griffin, 51, Thomas n, 46, and Mason Wilson, d they were brokers, and Gottlieb, 30, who said he was an.

ant District Attorney Garri- that three of the alleged ve confessed, and that their ons indicate that the total ht he "as much as $2,000,-

on said the gang has com- ond robbery after bond rob- recent months by waiting in eves in bank and brokerage nd receiving bond deliveries ried clerks.

ay of a motorcycle, en- plea of not guilt, ster on re- his counsel a bo ordinance ted until the November court.

ber of routine matters en up by the court at the session.

TEST BASES
BE ADDED

MISSISSIPPI RIVER HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION GROUP IS ORGANIZED

Preliminary plans for the organization of the Mississippi River Highway association, to promote construction and use of the highway along the west bank of the Mississippi river through Iowa and other states were completed at a meeting at Clinton, Monday, according to word received here.

It is the purpose of the association to exert united action in securing the paving of such sections of the highway as are not already improved, and to advertise the scenic beauties of the highway.

given the search for the jurist who disappeared August 6, by the offer of a $5,000 reward, voted Monday by the board of aldermen.

The ransom letter was received by Mrs. Crater at her summer home at Belgrade Lakes, Me., after having been forwarded from the Crater home in New York. The letter, unsigned, set forth that "we" had been caring for the justice since August 14, and that "we" believe there is something wrong with his head.

"Unless $20,000 in bills of small denominations is delivered to us as per instructions you will see him again only as a badly broken man, both physically and mentally."

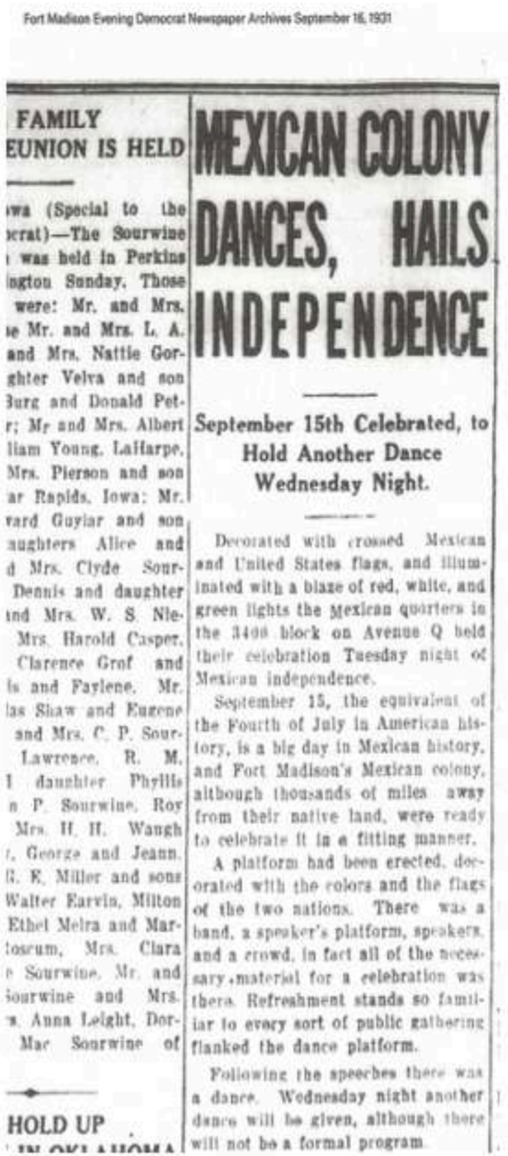
SUCCEEDS WETMORE.

WASHINGTON.—R. A. McKinney, Dallas, Texas, banker was elected president of the federal reserve advisory council Tuesday, succeeding Frank O. Wetmore, Chicago banker, who died recently. The council is meeting here in its regular quarterly session at the reserve board.

OPENING PROGRAM AT MEXICAN FIESTA IS DECIDED SUCCESS

The opening day's program of the two day fiesta celebrating the independence of Mexico from Spanish rule was held Monday at the Mexican village here. The program of addresses and special novelty num-

September 1931: Mexican Fiesta “Decorated with crossed Mexican and US flags, and illuminated with a blaze of red, white and green lights in the Mexican quarters on 3400 block of Avenue Q.



Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 16, 1931

FAMILY
EUNION IS HELD

wa (Special to the
crat)—The Sourwine
was held in Perkins
ington Sunday. Those
were: Mr. and Mrs.
e Mr. and Mrs. L. A.
and Mrs. Nattie Gor-
ghter Velva and son
Burg and Donald Pet-
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ar Rapids, Iowa; Mr.
vard Guyiar and son
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d Mrs. Clyde Sour-
Dennis and daughter
nd Mrs. W. S. Nie-
Mrs. Harold Casper,
Clarence Grof and
ls and Faylene, Mr.
las Shaw and Eugene
and Mrs. C. P. Sour-
Lawrence, R. M.
l daughter Phyllis
n P. Sourwine, Roy
Mrs. H. H. Waugh
, George and Jeann.
G. E. Miller and sons
Walter Earvin, Milton
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loscum, Mrs. Clara
e Sourwine, Mr. and
Sourwine and Mrs.
s. Anna Leight, Dor-
Mac Sourwine of

HOLD UP
IN OKLAHOMA

MEXICAN COLONY DANCES, HAILS INDEPENDENCE

September 15th Celebrated, to Hold Another Dance Wednesday Night.

Decorated with crossed Mexican and United States flags, and illuminated with a blaze of red, white, and green lights the Mexican quarters in the 3400 block on Avenue Q held their celebration Tuesday night of Mexican independence.

September 15, the equivalent of the Fourth of July in American history, is a big day in Mexican history, and Fort Madison's Mexican colony, although thousands of miles away from their native land, were ready to celebrate it in a fitting manner.

A platform had been erected, decorated with the colors and the flags of the two nations. There was a band, a speaker's platform, speakers, and a crowd, in fact all of the necessary material for a celebration was there. Refreshment stands so familiar to every sort of public gathering flanked the dance platform.

Following the speeches there was a dance. Wednesday night another dance will be given, although there will not be a formal program.

September 1932: Mexican Fiesta with dance, parade, and baseball game between the George Rashid All Stars and the Mexican Eagles.

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 14, 1932



Wednesday, September 14, 1932.

Annual Fiesta Will Be Held Here on Thursday and Friday

The annual celebration of the independence day fiesta of the Mexican population of Fort Madison will be held Thursday and Friday of this week on Avenue Q between 34th and 35th streets. Permission has been granted to those in charge to rope off this area.

The celebration of this event is held every year and each year the celebrations are made as elaborate as possible. Those who participate are patriotic to the core and do all in their power to commemorate the days in 1822 when they received their freedom from Spain.

The official opening of the fiesta will be at 2:30 on Thursday afternoon when the George Rashid All Stars meets the Mexican Eagles team in a ball game. These two teams have met before and each time the contest has been a real one.

Automobiles decorated with bunting and other festal trimmings will hold a parade in the afternoon. At 7:30 the program will be opened by a concert by the Mexican band. Next will come the reading of the Declaration of Independence from Spain, which will be read by Jesus Dian, secretary of the fiesta.

Others who will participate in the program are Misses Paul and Isabel Hidalgo, Benito Sandoval, president, Guadalupe Sandavol, Solidad Lazano and Sara Pabon.

After the program a dance will be held on the platform. At 1 o'clock on Friday another parade will be held, also a drill by some of the youths.

The George Rashid All Stars and the Mexican Eagles will meet in a second game on Friday and at 7:30 on Friday night will be the closing dance.

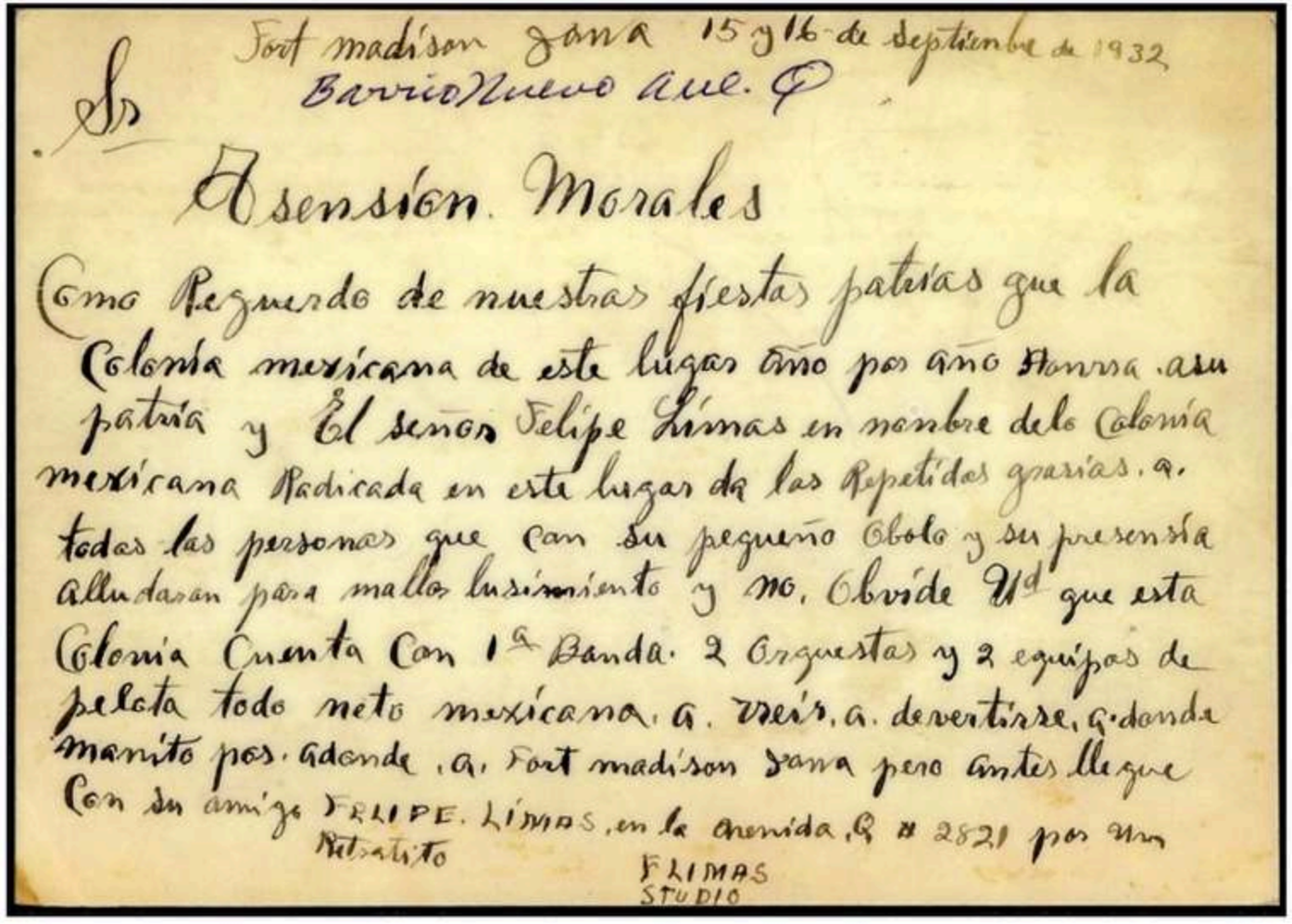
The Mexican people of Fort Madison hope to make this year's celebration one of the best ever. Each year many of the other citizens of Fort Madison come to the fiesta and enjoy the program and watch the dance.

It is planned this year to park the cars on the ball diamond on 35th street. Those who intend to drive down to the fiesta are asked to use 35th street since they will be able to get closer to the celebration by this route.

“Royalty of the 1932 fiesta” Avenue Q (Sept. 15-16) Mexican Fiesta Queen and court: Front-Pabla Hidalgo and brother Isavel. Back-Juan Sandoval, Frances Mosqueda, Lyle Guzman, Julia Juarez, Manuela Limas, and Frank Diaz. Photo taken by Felipe Limas, Limas Studio,



1932: Photo gifted to Asension Morales, signed by Felipe Limas



Fort madison Iowa 15 y 16 de septiembre de 1932
Barrio Nuevo ave. Q

Sr

Asension. Morales

Como Recuerdo de nuestras fiestas patrias que la Colonia mexicana de este lugar año por año honra. asu patria y El señor Felipe Limas en nombre dela Colonia mexicana Radicada en este lugar da las Repetidas gracias. a. todas las personas que con su pequeño Obolo y su presencia alludaran para mallor lusimiento y no. Olvide Ud que esta Colonia Cuenta Con 1a Banda. 2 Orquestas y 2 equipos de pelota todo neto mexicana. a. Veir. a. deverterse. q. donde manito pos. adonde. a. Fort madison Iowa pero antes llegue Con su amigo FELIPE. LIMAS. en la avenida Q # 2821 por un Retratito

FLIMAS
STUDIO

September 1934: Mexican Fiest “under the direction of [Venito] Sandoval, president of the board of directors of the Mexican Village.”



Wednesday

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 12, 1934

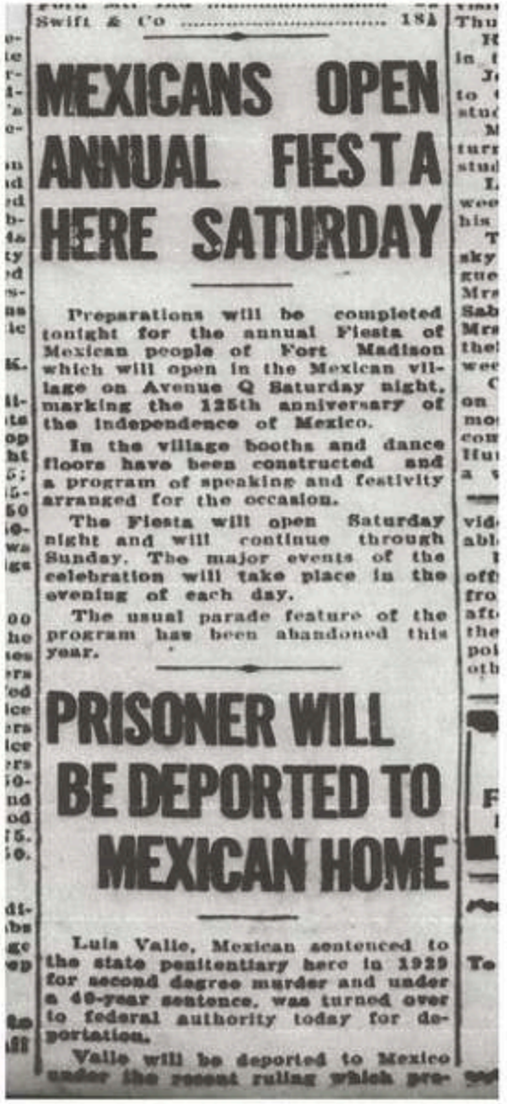
MEXICANS PLAN ANNUAL FIESTA SAT. AND SUN.

Mexican residents of Fort Madison are preparing today for the annual celebration of Mexican Independence Day, which will be observed here Saturday and Sunday.

The event will be celebrated in the Mexican village on Avenue Q with a program of dancing and general activities. Booths will be erected where Mexican foods will be sold by girls in Mexican costume and evenings there will be general fiesta activities through the entire village.

The program this year is under the direction of Venito Sandoval, president of the board of directors of the Mexican village. The event marks the 125th anniversary of

September 1934: Mexican Fiesta on Avenue Q without parade.



Swift & Co 18½

MEXICANS OPEN ANNUAL FIESTA HERE SATURDAY

Preparations will be completed tonight for the annual Fiesta of Mexican people of Fort Madison which will open in the Mexican village on Avenue Q Saturday night, marking the 125th anniversary of the independence of Mexico.

In the village booths and dance floors have been constructed and a program of speaking and festivity arranged for the occasion.

The Fiesta will open Saturday night and will continue through Sunday. The major events of the celebration will take place in the evening of each day.

The usual parade feature of the program has been abandoned this year.

PRISONER WILL BE DEPORTED TO MEXICAN HOME

Luis Valle, Mexican sentenced to the state penitentiary here in 1929 for second degree murder and under a 40-year sentence, was turned over to federal authority today for deportation.

Valle will be deported to Mexico under the recent ruling which pre-

1935: Sara and Manuel Cangas wedding Manuel Cangas. WWII US Army veteran.





1935: Segregated “Mexican” school built through US Public Works Administration $7,000 grant, the school district spent $9,000 through construction.



THE WORLAND GRIT

WORLAND, WYOMING, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1935.

AN ARMY OPENS WAR IN AFR

BUFFALO GRIDDERS ST HOME GAME FRI.

The Washakie Warrior football eleven thoroughly trounced the Buffalo Bison eleven here last Friday to win their second straight game of the season, and showing promise of having the best football eleven the Warriors have had for several years. They made their first touchdown in the first few minutes of play with a forward, via lateral pass then made a 25 yard run for the second touchdown. A 42 yard run brought the third touchdown. The most sensational run of the game for a touchdown was made by Floyd Kleinschmidt, who raced 75 yards for its fourth touchdown. Buffalo threatened to score against the Warriors only once during the game. Practically every second string man of the Worland aggregation was used against the visitors and they came in to a fine game of ball.

Indications are that Worland has a fine chance of having a championship eleven this year. They will have one more game with a non-conference team that will be played at Greybull to-day.

In the Buffalo game Worland gained 245 yards from scrimmage and Buffalo made 106. Worland gained 99 yards on passes and Buffalo gained 13 yards on passes. Worland was penalized for a total of 45 yards and Buffalo 0. Buffalo gained four first and tens and Worland made three, with the exception of the ones made on touchdowns.

Following is a play by play account of the game:

First Quarter

Worland kicked off to the Buffalo 10. Buffalo returned the kick to their own 12 yard line. Buffalo fumbled on the next play but recovered on their own two yard line. Buffalo was forced to punt the kick

800 Ethiopians Killed in Attack this Morning

United Press News Special To The Worland Grit.

Undad, Ethopia.—Italy started war in Ethopia today, laying herself open to application of economic military senalties by the League Nations with consequent danger of war in Mediterrian. World shocked by actuality of event which only a few closer observers realized for some time was inevitable. Mussolini has now transformed defiant talk into action. He has taken fatal steps and so brazenly defied world opinion and great powers that it is inconceivable they can sit back and do nothing. Council League has been called into emergency session. There can be little doubt Italy will be branded as an aggressor and outlawed by League as inevitable step towards application of penalties. There are unmistakable signs Britian and France currently agreed to act together.

Fast moving war developments:—Benito Mussolini's long awaited conquest of ancient Ethiopian empire began to - day endangering League nations and peace at Europe. Italian troops crossed frontier with town, Adowa as objective. Several battle reported raging, although there has been no official declration of war.

Infantry columns accompanied by squadrons of bombing pursuit planes, crossed Mareb river from Italian Colony Erithrea, into Ethiopia converging on Ethiopian town, Adowa where Italians met defeat thirty-six years ago.

Geneva— League of Nations Council convoked for Saturday into emergency session. Serious deal with gravest crisis since World War. Emperor Haile Selassie telegraphed the League that military planes bombed Adowa and Aksum.

Keeping Their Eye on the Ball

FUNERAL SERVICES HELD YESTERDAY FOR BIG HORN BASIN PIONEER WOMAN

Funeral services were held here yesterday for Mrs. E. A. Winchester at the Methodist Church. Rev. Dwight Kitch conducting the services.

At the request of Mrs. Winchester the Order of Eastern Star gave their regular funeral service with Miss Luella Breey, Matron in charge, assisted by other officers. Mrs. E. E. MacLeod sang several songs.

Mrs. Winchester was laid to rest in the Winchester Cemetery beside her husband who passed away several years ago.

Was Pioneer in Wyoming

With the death of Mrs. Winchester another of the pioneers of Wyoming has passed on. Mrs. Winchester in company with her husband, a Civil War veteran, came to Fe, N. M.

GRINDING OF SUGAR BEETS AT LOCAL FACTORY MO

Local E.R.A. Canning Project Is Completed

The Washakie County E. R. A. canning Project came to a close here last Thursday. Mrs. Avis Terrill who has been in charge of the project the past year reports that more than 2000 cans of vegetables and fruits have been put up.

Vegetables of almost every kind have been canned under Mrs. Terrill's instructions and many kinds of fruits as well. No meat was canned in this county.

This division also reports that more of this type of produce was canned here than in any other county in state.

The canning and preserving of vegetables and fruits in cans is one way of helping out during the long winter months and Mrs. Terrill is to be congratulated on making the most of the time and the produce.

P. W. A. Approves Grant For Mexican School Here

Last Friday the Grit received a telegram from Senator Carey's office telling us that the allotment asked for here for the construction of the school for the Mexican children had been allotted.

The allotment covers a grant of $2,000.00, school district No. 6 is to supply the balance which is to be $7,000.00

The building will no doubt be built in the west part of town and

Worland

1936: Mexican Fiesta on Avenue Q with a Cuban orchestra.

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 15, 1936

FIESTA OPENS HERE TONIGHT

Mexicans of Fort Madison today are preparing to begin tonight a two-day celebration observing the 126th anniversary of the liberating of Mexico from Spanish rule.

Out in the Mexican village on Avenue Q, the street is being decorated today with Mexican and American flags. A dance platform is in place and booths are in order awaiting to sell Mexican foods to visitors at the fiesta tonight.

A program of speaking and music is announced for tonight and the celebration will continue Wednesday night, closing the fiesta.

A Cuban orchestra has been brought here to furnish music for the fiesta program.

1938-1940: Jose and Hilaria Hernandez with grandchildren at the *Istafiate Santa Fe* housing compound. Left to right: Angel, Raul, Hilaria, Jose, Antonia, Petra.



September 1938: “Four pretty Mexican girls, Rosita [Fransoto] Frausto, Lupe Guzman, Frances Mosqueda, and Mary Sandoval, will be crowned queens and maids of honor...”

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 15, 1938

FIESTA OPENS HERE TONIGHT

Out in the Mexican village tonight Mexicans of Fort Madison will begin a two day celebration in observance of the anniversary of the anniversary of the signing of the Mexican Declaration of Idepedece.

Four pretty Mexican girls, Rosita Fransoto, Lupe Guzman, Frences Mosqueda and Mary Sandoval will be crowned queens and maids-of-honor of the fiesta. There will be Mexican food served tonight and Friday night from open air stands on Avenue Q, speaking, singing, a parade and dancing.

The annual Independence Day fiesta is arranged by residents of the Mexican village through a committee of officers elected each year to supervise the event.

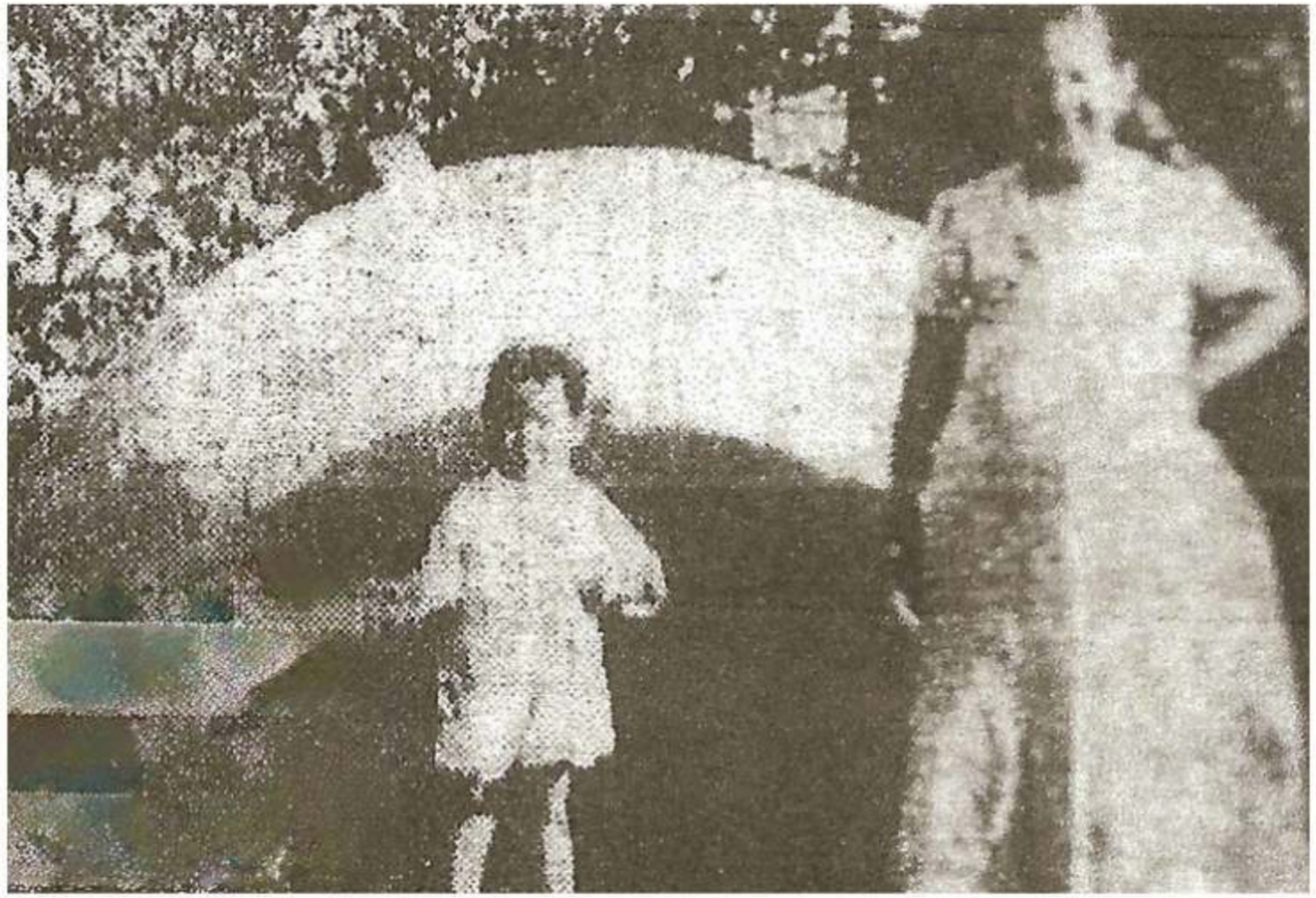
During the two days in which the fiesta continues, streets of the "village" are decorated with American and Mexican colors; members of the village wear Mexican costumes and both American and Mexican dancing is done in a pavilion erected for the occasion.

Calls Peac



J. B. Matthews, v
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1938: Amelia Hidalgo, wife of Ysevel, and son "Bernard" beside a wood-fired bake oven made of mud bricks at home backyard at 3406 Avenue Q.



September 1940: “For the first time in many years Fort Madison Mexicans will fail to conduct their annual Independence Day ‘Fiesta’ this year.” Cause: Unemployment and lack of funding.

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 14, 1940

MEXICANS HERE PASSING OVER ANNUAL FIESTA

For the first time in many years Fort Madison Mexicans will fail to conduct their annual Independence Day "Fiesta" this year.

The "Fiesta" which has always been held in Mexican village on Avenue "Q" on September 15 and 16, was abandoned this year because of a lack of employment among Mexicans and their inability this fall to meet the expenses of the occasion.

The Mexican Independence Day corresponding to the American July 4, is September 15. Under the usual program Mexicans here begin the celebration of the holiday the night of September 15 and continue the event through September 16.

But in the Mexican village tomorrow and Monday there will be no such celebration this year. Mexicans said today that they will resume the "Fiesta" programs "next year, if there is work and means available."

May 13,1941: Funeral for Reyes Alvarez, age 22, daughter of Fidel C. Alvarez. Flower girls, left to right: Julia Cangas, Francis Mosquedo, Lupe Guzman, Agapita Rameriz, Lupe Piloto, and Sara Cangas.



1946: Fire of “undetermined origin” almost destroys the four-room home of Cozmo Lopez on 1614 Thirty-fifth Street. Lopez carried out by neighbors.

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives January 7, 1946

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Fire Destroys Home In Mexican Village

Fire of undetermined origin early Sunday morning almost totally destroyed the four room home of Cosme Lopez, 1614 Thirty-fifth street (in the Mexican village).

Firemen received three calls almost simultaneously at 1:09 a. m. Sunday, reporting the blaze. Noting the glow from the fire in the sky, they turned in a call for all firemen to respond and equipment from both engine houses went to the scene.

After two hours, the fire was extinguished and spread to adjacent homes prevented. A number of sheds and small outhouses suffered some damage from sparks and heat.

Before the firemen arrived at the scene, residents of the vicinity had carried a man, not identified but believed to have been Lopez, from the burning structure. He apparently had been sleeping in the house and was overcome by smoke but not burned.

Two rooms of the four room

September 1946: Mexican Fiesta draws large crowd. Mexican queen Helen Sanchez and American queen Lucy Sandoval crowned. Speaker Carlos Ruiz "asked the audience to remember that there were older and younger generations in the Mexican Village, and said the younger generation, American-born and American in tradition was doing its best to fit into this American picture."



Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 16, 1946

orn September 9
spital.

ad boy was born
today in Sacred
to Mr. and Mrs.
Nauvoo, Ill.

s. Calvin Lowen-
n, Iowa, are par-
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nce born at 5:45
Sacred Heart hos-

nd son was born
. Kenneth Ander-
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Sacred Heart hos-

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ed Heart hospital
s. Paul Schwartz,
Iowa. The infant
unds, 14 ounces.

rs. Jack Barker,
., became parents
hing five pounds,
:03 p. m. Sunday
rt hospital.

Mrs. Joe Sanders,
wa, are parents of
aby, born at 9:05
in Sacred Heart
ted six pounds, 12

Mexican Fiesta Attracts 500

The two-day Mexican Fiesta opened last night under clear skies and fair weather as compared with the violent rainstorms which greeted the celebration of the Mexican independence day fete just 10 years ago.

Large Crowd

A crowd of perhaps 500 came out to see the independence day ceremonies, eat Mexican food, and dance to the music of Tiny Biggs and his band.

Mexican queen Helen Sanchez and American queen Lucy Salazar were crowned by the Rev. E. P. Seidel, and speeches were made by Frank Diaz, Benito Sandoval, Louis Salazar, Felix Sanchez, and Carlos Ruiz.

Speech

Ruiz, delivering the final address, asked the audience to remember that there was an older and younger generation in the Mexican village, and said the younger generation, American-born and American in tradition, was doing its best to fit into the American picture.

The Fiesta will continue and conclude tonight from 8 p. m. to 2 a. m. The entertainment will be a special movie and dancing.

1947: LULAC became the first social institution in the Mexican Village. Social institution is defined as an organized system of social norms, roles, and structures designed to meet fundamental societal needs. Rather than a mere physical building, LULAC represented the broader, established patterns of behavior and expectations for members in the Mexican Village.



Founding of the LULAC organization in the Mexican Village created a “community.”
Three core elements of a community: **Social interaction:** relationships, communications, and social network of daily interactions that bind community members together; **Common values and norms**, interests, and an explicit ”we-feeling” (psychological sense of belonging and solidarity); **Geographic location:** defined neighborhood, enclave, or village.



Celebrating Mexican Fiesta at the LULAC with two talented singers, Antonia and Petra Hernandez.







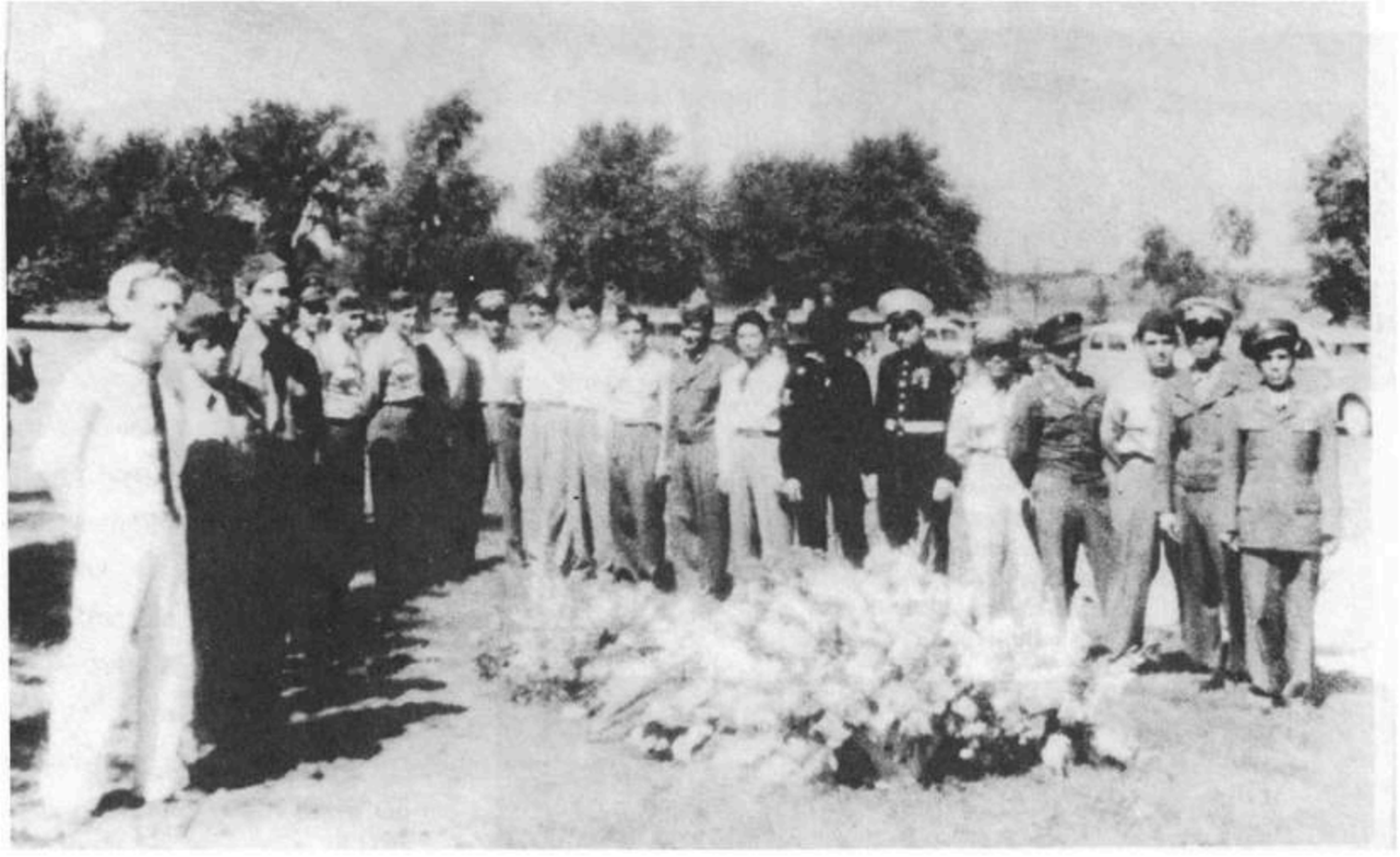

REPUBLICA MEXIC



Mexican Fiesta float: Carmen Puga-Mexican Queen, Mary Pavon-American Queen.



Men from the Mexican Village served in WWII. All returned except John Piloto, who was killed in Germany. Shortly after the WWII, veterans gathered to pay respect to John Piloto by his grave. Veterans from the Village included: Santiago Salazar, Gambino Juarez, Thomas Prado, Guadalupe Godinez, Carlos Ruiz, Manuel Cangas, Jose Diaz, Cesario Juarez, Pedro Martinez, Sacramento Frausto, Daniel Villanueva, Jesus Guzman, and Pedro Ortiz.



1946-1948: Jose Hernandez with daughter Antonia at *Istafiate* housing compound.

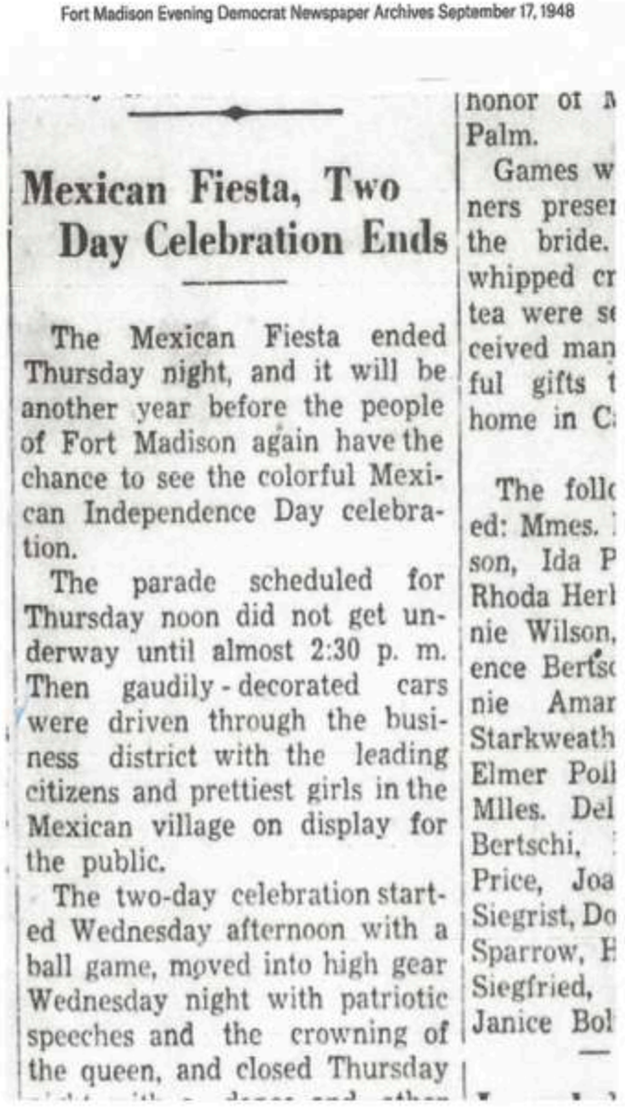


Santa Fe *Istafiate* Mexican housing compound.



September 1948: Mexican Fiesta included "gaudily-decorated cars driven through the business district with the leading citizens and prettiest girls in the Mexican village on display."

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 17, 1948



Mexican Fiesta, Two Day Celebration Ends

The Mexican Fiesta ended Thursday night, and it will be another year before the people of Fort Madison again have the chance to see the colorful Mexican Independence Day celebration.

The parade scheduled for Thursday noon did not get underway until almost 2:30 p. m. Then gaudily-decorated cars were driven through the business district with the leading citizens and prettiest girls in the Mexican village on display for the public.

The two-day celebration started Wednesday afternoon with a ball game, moved into high gear Wednesday night with patriotic speeches and the crowning of the queen, and closed Thursday

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Students from the “Mexican room” at Richardson school



Several Mexican students at the Richardson School.



School girls from the Mexican Village: Left Rosa Estrada; center right Lucy Pavon; right Rose(last name not legible).



1949: Formation of the Fort Madison Latin American Club by Father Kempker. The four “points stressed through the club are religion, understanding, unity, and recreation. It is to teach the ‘upholding and defending of religion; to foster and perpetuate patriotism; to inoculate a sense of individual obligation of the community, and to insure equality of all peoples that the principles of justice and democracy might be safeguarded. Officers: Carlos Ruiz-president, Sebastin Alvarez-vice-president, Father Kempker-treasurer, Felipe Limas-assistant treasurer, Mary Pavon-secretary, and Susie Pavon-assistant secretary. Fifty-six members.



Mexicans Invited To Membership in New Club of City

The Rev. Adrian Kempker, assistant pastor of Sacred Heart church, announced today that he has organized a Latin-American club for the Mexican people of Fort Madison. The club is open to all Mexicans regardless of religious affiliations.

Father Kempker explained that the four points to be stressed through the club are religion, understanding, unity and recreation. It is to teach the "upholding and defending of religion; to foster and perpetuate patriotism; to inoculate a sense of individual obligation of the community, and to insure the equality of all peoples that the principles of justice and democracy might be safeguarded."

Officers Named

Officers elected are: President, Carlos Ruis; vice president, Sebastian Alvarez; treasurer, Father Kempker; assistant treasurer, Felipe Limas; secretary, Mary Pavon; and assistant secretary, Susie Pavon.

Plans are now under way for raising funds for the erection of a meeting place in the vicinity of the Mexican Village. During the meantime, Father Kempker said, meetings will be held in the Reges hall, 3439 Avenue Q.

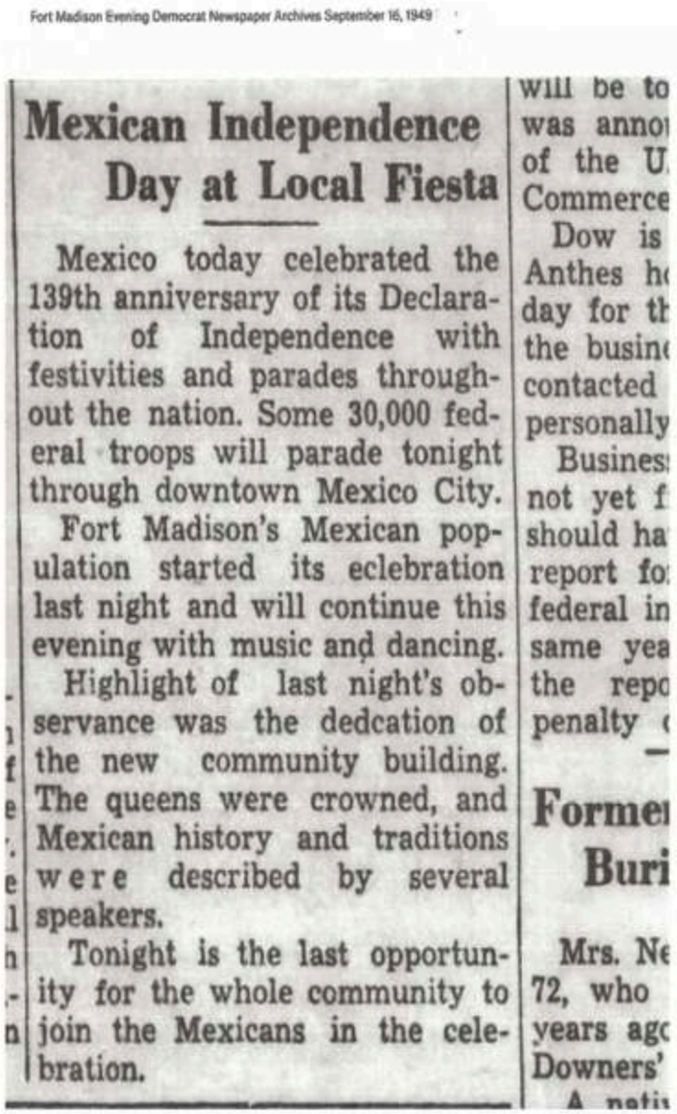
To Sponsor Dance

The club will sponsor a Valentine dance Sunday evening, Feb. 13, in Reges hall. This is to be a completely Spanish style dance for which music will be furnished by Pompio Ramerir, Frank Martinez, Manuel Cangas, Rufino Chavis and Carlos Ruis.

At present the club has a membership of about 50.

1949

September 1949: Queens crowned, and Mexican history and traditions described by speakers.



Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 16, 1949

Mexican Independence Day at Local Fiesta

Mexico today celebrated the 139th anniversary of its Declaration of Independence with festivities and parades throughout the nation. Some 30,000 federal troops will parade tonight through downtown Mexico City.

Fort Madison's Mexican population started its eclebration last night and will continue this evening with music and dancing.

Highlight of last night's observance was the dedcation of the new community building. The queens were crowned, and Mexican history and traditions were described by several speakers.

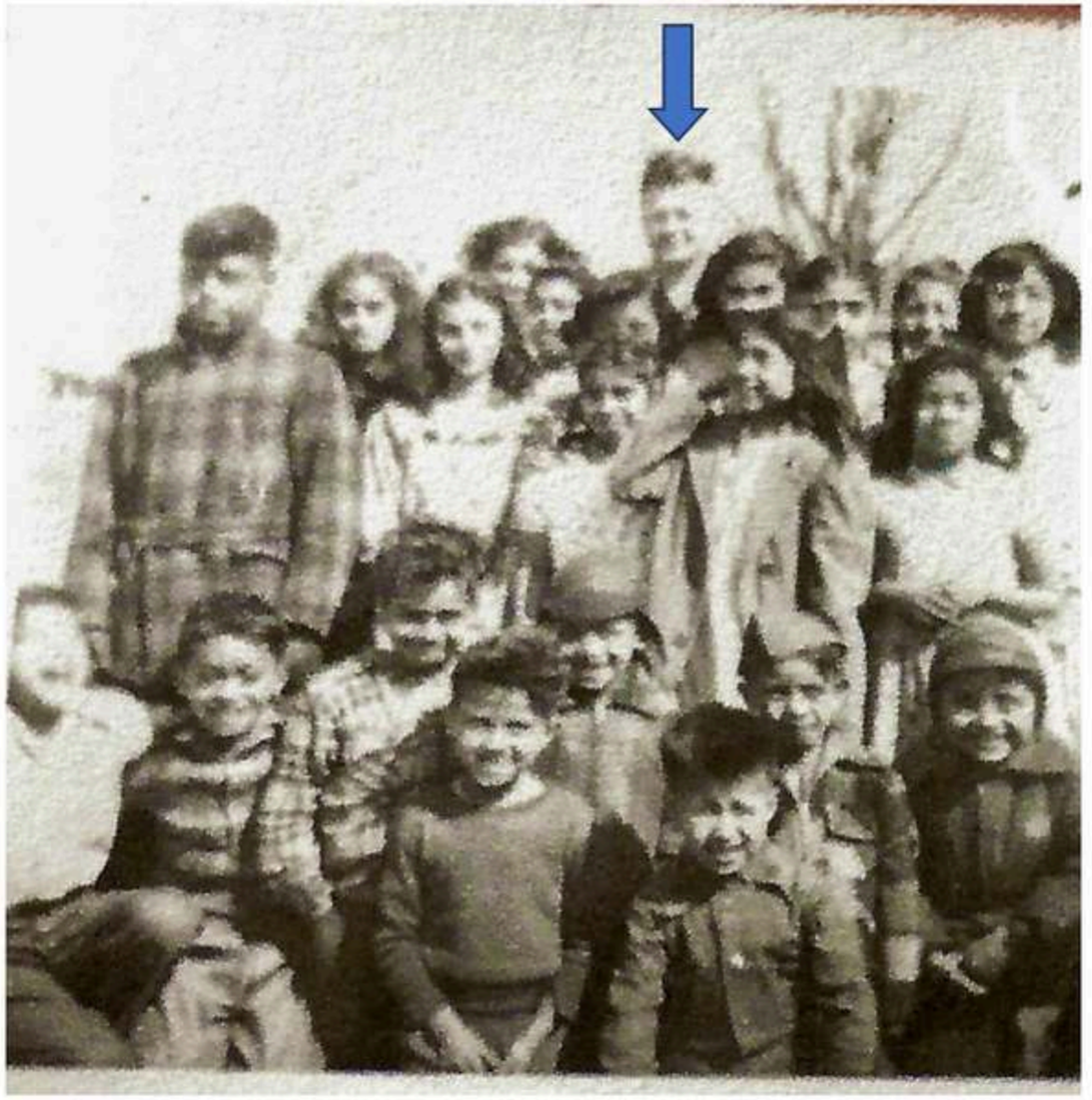
Tonight is the last opportunity for the whole community to join the Mexicans in the celebration.

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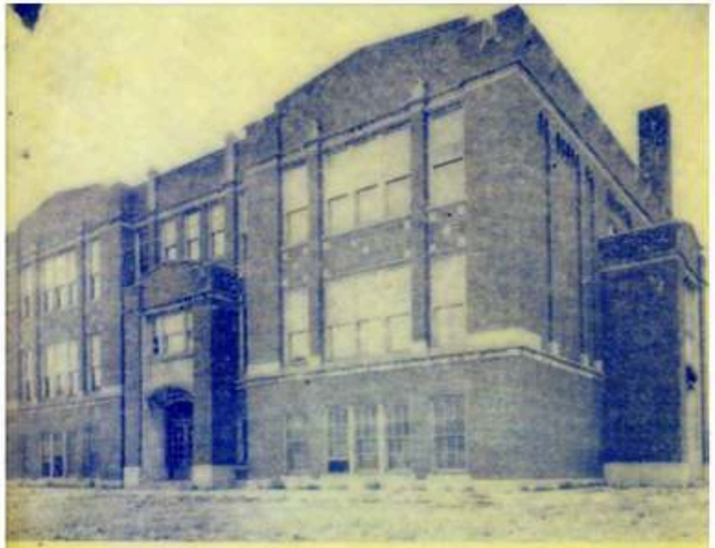
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Late 1940s early 1950s: Father Kempker with children from the Mexican Village.



Richardson School PTA booklet cover and directory page, 1949-1959. It lists the Americanization class, known as the Mexican Room, taught by Mrs. Nola Davis in the gym.



Richardson School

P. T. A.

FORT MADISON, IOWA

1949-1950

DIRECTORY

Americanization	Mrs. Davis,	Gym
Kindergarten	Miss Vonderhaar,	First floor S E
Grade One	Miss Smith,	Rear of lunch room
Grade One	Miss Kerstetter,	First floor N E
Grade Two	Mrs. Brandenberg,	Between gym and first floor
Grades 2 and 3	Miss Benson,	First floor N W
Grade Three	Miss Siegrist,	Between gym and first floor S E
Grade Four	Miss Lampe,	First floor S W
Grades 4 and 5	Miss Zurcher,	Top floor S W
Grade Five	Mrs. Lueckel,	Top floor N W
Grade Six	Miss McCord,	Top floor S E
Grade Six	Miss Cole,	Top floor N E
Principal's Office,	Between first and second floors E	

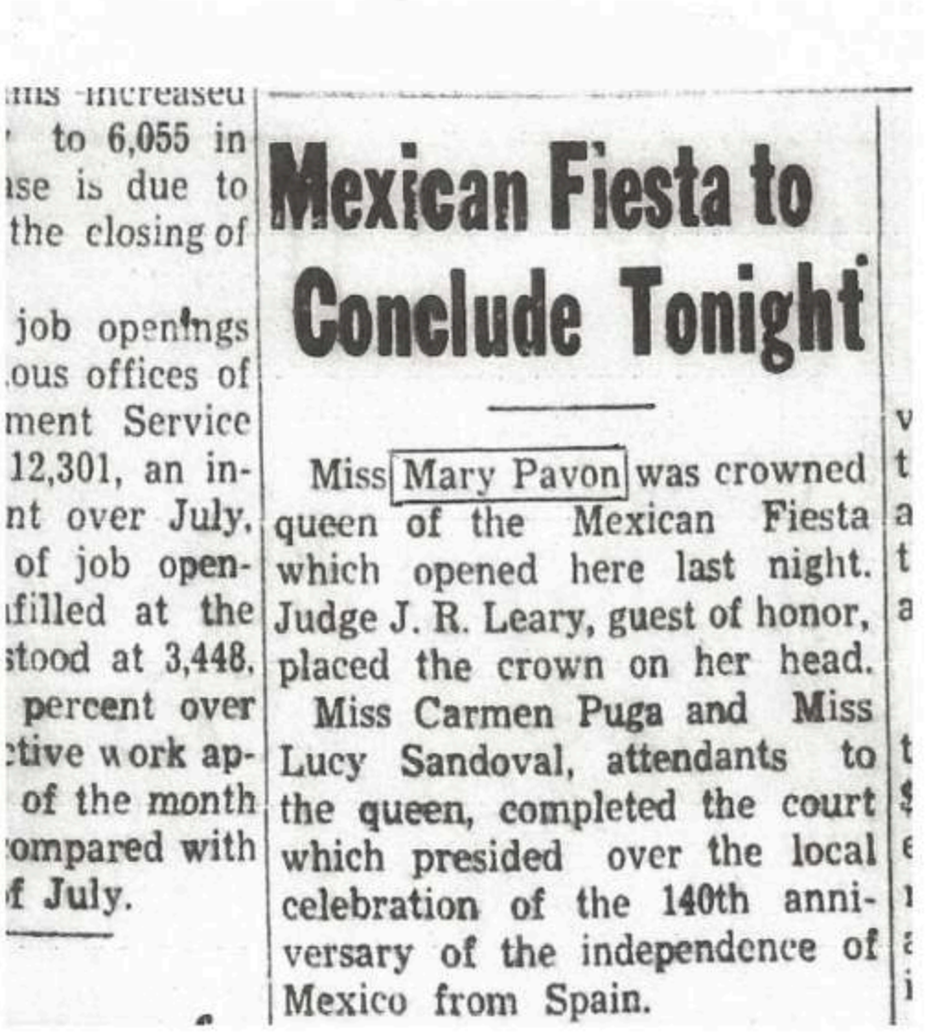
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Mrs. Nola Davis in the Richardson Mexican Room.



September 1950: Mary Pavon crowned queen. Carmen Puga, and Lucy Sandoval were "attendants."

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 16, 1950



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...f July.

Mexican Fiesta to Conclude Tonight

Miss Mary Pavon was crowned queen of the Mexican Fiesta which opened here last night. Judge J. R. Leary, guest of honor, placed the crown on her head.

Miss Carmen Puga and Miss Lucy Sandoval, attendants to the queen, completed the court which presided over the local celebration of the 140th anniversary of the independence of Mexico from Spain.

September 1951: Mexican Fiesta moved a week ahead due to the Fort Madison championship rodeo. Queen candidates: Nellie Hernandez, Lucy Sandoval, and Irene Salazar. Mexican Hat dance, *La Raspa,* and *La Bamba* demonstrations by grade-school children under direction of Suzie Pavon. Junior Mexican Eagle played against St. Paul at the Mexican Eagles field.



Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives September 7, 1951

Broken Limbs--No Blood

DEEP RIVER, Conn. (UP)—Arms and legs, hands and feet, were scattered about the roadside. A station wagon had overturned.

But spectators were disappointed that the scene wasn't as gory after all.

The station wagon was owned by the Madmoiselle Hanzikin Refrigerating company of New York City. The broken "bodies" scattered about were nothing but store-window mannikins. Police arrested the uninjured driver, Marvin S. Goodman of New York City, on a reckless driving charge.

Festival at Nauvoo to Begin Today

The 16th annual Nauvoo Grape Festival opens tonight for a three-day session which Nauvoo residents hope will break the attendance records established last year when the new state park was dedicated.

Emil O. Baxter is general chairman for the festival, to which most Nauvoo persons have lent helping hands.

To Crown Queen

Miss Martha Sue Yager, 17-year-old high school senior will be crowned queen of the festival in opening ceremonies tonight. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Yager, Nauvoo, is an honor student, musician, ballet dancer and cheerleader.

Members of her court will be the Misses Annette Baxter, Janet Bennewith, Nancy Deines and Joan Beger.

Also on tonight's program will be a concert by the Nauvoo band, a show by Royal United Shows, and the traditional Wedding of the Wine and Cheese which celebrates Nauvoo's most noted products.

Parades Planned

The Kitchen Pet Parade is the scheduled highlight of Saturday afternoon's program. A group of acrobats, special band music, clowns, and kiddie cars are also on the program.

Square dancing will be Saturday evening's entertainment along with the wine and cheese ceremony, band music, and

Plan Fiesta In Mexican Center Here

The annual Fort Madison Mexican Fiesta will be held this weekend at the Mexican center in the 1400 block of Thirty-sixth street one week ahead of the date that the fiesta commemorates.

Moved Up Due to Rodeo

Each year for the last 36 or 40 years the fiesta has been held Sept. 15 and 16. It was Sept. 15, 1810, that the Mexican independence from Spain was declared and the Republic of Mexico was established.

But this year the date conflicts with the fourth annual Fort Madison world's championship rodeo so the fiesta was moved up one week.

The celebration will start at 7 p. m. Saturday, when a fiesta queen will be crowned by the Rev. John Bekendorf of Farmington. Candidates for queen are Nellie Hernandez, Lucy Sandoval and Irene Salazar.

Also during the Saturday night program patriotic speeches will be made by Dario Sandoval, president of the fiesta, and Luis Salazar. Dance exhibitions, the Mexican Hat Dance, La Raspa and La Bamba, will be given by grade school children under the direction of Suzie Pavon.

Dancing to the orchestra of Lewis T. Sutro of Nauvoo, Ill., will conclude the first night's program.

Ball Game, Dancing

Sunday events will consist of a baseball game at 2:30 p. m. on the Mexican Eagles field between the Junior Mexican Eagles and St. Paul.

At 8:30 p. m. Sunday there will be dancing in the Mexican center to the music of Ray Allison and the Rhythm Aces from Galesburg.

Officers of the fiesta program besides Sandoval are Chris Guzman, vice president; Mary Pavon, secretary; the Rev. A. R. Kempker, treasurer; and Frank Diaz, master of ceremonies.

Ruth Gets

December 1952: Third year of *posada* event at the Mexican Village with a traditional seven-day visit to homes. Nativity scene setup at the Vicente Mendez home on 3404 Avenue Q.



Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives December 23, 1952

Posada, Colorful Mexican Custom, Observed in City

The Posada, an annual Mexican celebration heralding the arrival of the Christ Child, will come to a climax at the home of Vicente Mendez, 3404 Avenue Q, at the stroke of midnight Christmas eve

In Progress Seven Days

The celebration, now in its third year in the local Mexican residential area, has been in progress for the past seven days.

Each evening a different Mexican couple portraying Mary and Joseph tours the village in search of shelter for the anticipated birth of Jesus and at each house they are turned away just as were the Holy Couple 1952 years ago at Bethlehem.

Following the nightly portrayal of the plight of Mary and Joseph, the Mexican families gather at the Mendez home where there has been constructed one of Fort Madison's most elaborate Nativity scenes.

Prayers and rosaries are said before the scene which depicts not only the Nativity itself but various phases of Biblical history, including the exclusion of Adam and Eve from Paradise through the child and adult life of Jesus.

On the ninth night of the celebration — Christmas eve, the families again gather at the Mendez home and the Christ

1954: Canuto Mosquedo, who maintained the grounds of the Reading Room building at Shopton yards shown on left.





1955: Juan Vasquez, age 55, charged with intent to murder Cozmo Lopez, age 89 with a bayonet and broken whiskey bottle. After drinking five quarts of beer at 5am Sunday, Vaquez went to Lopez's "two room shanty" to buy whiskey.



At Fort Madison

Charged With Assault With Murder Intent

FORT MADISON—Juan Vasquez, 55, of 1619 Thirty-seventh street, is in the Lee county jail in lieu of $10,000 bond after formally being charged with assault with intent to commit murder.

Cozmo Lopez, 89, victim of an alleged attack by Vasquez, is reported in fair condition in Sacred Heart hospital.

Police said they were called to the 2-room shanty of Lopez at 1614 Thirty-fifth street Sunday afternoon, where they found the aged man bleeding profusely from multiple head injuries apparently inflicted with a broken whisky bottle.

* * *

Officers said Vasquez readily admitted fighting with Lopez, but that he (Vasquez) did not intend to kill the old man.

He said he hit Lopez with a bayonet, then buried the weapon in a field. Vasquez led officers to the spot—a short distance from the Lopez shanty. The weapon was buried in weeds, and its blade was covered with blood.

Vasquez, a native of Mexico, was brought to the station where he was interrogated further. Speaking only Spanish, he told police his version of the fight through his son, Victor, 26.

Vasquez said he arose about 5 a. m. Sunday and started drinking beer. He said he consumed about five quarts, and about noon went to Lopez' house to buy whisky. He said he paid Lopez $3 and the two sat, talked and drank.

* * * * *

Suddenly, Vasquez said, he noticed that the old man had a bayonet in his hand. Vasquez said he grabbed his hand and hit Lopez with the flat end. Vasquez told police he did not know what caused the fight or how many times he had hit Lopez. He said Lopez was standing up when he left the shanty. Vasquez told officers he then went home to sober up.

* * *

At the hospital, later, Lopez gave a different story of the battle. The injured man who also needed an interpreter, charged that Vasquez attacked him with the bayonet and threatened to kill him.

First, Lopez said, Vasquez asked if he could buy some whisky. Lopez said he told Vasquez he had none. Then, Lopez told police, Vasquez brandished the bayonet.

Lopez' shanty was splattered with blood when authorities arrived on the scene.

1971: Mrs. Davis being honored. Sebastian Alvarez (photo)and nephew Fidel Alvarez presented her a plaque at school board meeting. Mrs. Davis started in 1923 as the teacher in the “Mexican class” for 28 years. *Los Regionales* combo provided the music.



GIVEN SPECIAL HONOR during Thursday night's Fort Madison Community school district board of education meeting by Mexican-American families here was Mrs. Nola Davis, a retired teacher. She's pictured with Sebastian Alvarez who made the presentation of a special plaque. In the center is Fidel Alvarez with bouquet of roses given Mrs. Davis.

Honored by People She Served So Long

By DICK FLECKENSTEIN

Back in 1923, officials of the old Fort Madison independent school district contacted Mrs. Nola Davis and asked her to help Mexican-American children with the English language.

It was to be only a temporary job, they said.

The "temporary" position lasted 33 years. All were spent at Richardson school, the last five as a regular classroom teacher.

Thursday night, the venerable Mrs. Davis, now 81, was honored by the people she helped for so many years.

"It is only fitting that we pay tribute to Mrs. Davis during a school board meeting," said Sebastian Alvarez as he and his nephew, Fidel Alvarez, made a special presentation of a plaque and a bouquet of roses to the retired teacher.

The presentation was the first item on the school board's agenda Thursday night and it was a highlight of the meeting.

Mrs. Davis was unaware that the presentation was planned.

"I'm flabbergasted, she said with moist eyes. "I thought you people wanted me to come to the meeting to help in some bilingual teaching matters."

Mrs. Davis retired from teaching in 1956. She lives at 413 Seventh Street.

The plaque awarded her carried the inscription: "In appreciation of two generations of devoted service to the Mexican-American people of the Fort Madison community."

It was signed "The Mexican-American Families of Fort Madison."

Sebastian and Fidel Alvarez were chosen to make the presentation on behalf of other Mexican-American families in the community.

The presentation program included a special Latin American music salute to Mrs. Davis by the Los Regionales combo composed of Daniel Landeros, Lupe Sandoval, Casey Lopez, Marion Hernandez and Edward Mendez.

September 1976: Mexican Fiesta keynote speaker, Sister Munoz. Noted that some people “are still excluded from full participation in the economic stream of American life’ and that some persons are “racially, politically, and economic enslaved .. The saddest tragedy would be for us to think the struggle is over.”

Fiesta opens

With speeches, music, food and dancing, persons were welcomed Friday night to a two-day celebration here of the 160th anniversary of Mexico's independence from Spain.

The Mexican Fiesta in the 3400 block of Avenue Q dates to 1924.

This year, in addition to the traditional speeches of welcome and historic reference, one speaker said there is "still too much oppression" of persons of Mexican descent.

In that keynote speech, Sister Irene Munoz of the Muscatine Migrant Council said some persons are "still excluded from full participation in the economic stream of American life" and that some persons are "racially, politically and economically enslaved".

The celebration, she said, "should not just be" an opportunity for "food, dancing, music or speeches".

"The saddest tragedy would be for us to think the struggle is over," she said.

Fort Madison Mayor Pro Tempore Robert F. O'Malley, substituting for Mayor J. Wayne Keller (who has been ill), told the crowd earlier that the fiesta is "a very important part of Fort Madison's history".

"It behooves each and every one of us to help our friends celebrate the 160th anniversary" of Mexican independence, he said.

Crowned Friday night by O'Malley were Mexican Queen Anna Marie Hernandez, 14, of 3425 Avenue Q, and American Queen Diane Estrada, 14, of 1404 Thirty-ninth Street. Their attendants were Linda Dains, 13, of 3401 Avenue L, and Roxanna Lane, 14, of 2901 Avenue M.

Scheduled keynote speaker tonight is Mrs. Lois Eichaker of Fort Madison RR2. Other scheduled speakers are Guadalupe Mendez, president of the local League of United Latin American Citizens, State Sen. Lowell Junkins of Montrose and State Rep. Clay Spear of Burlington, both Democrats.

The Saturday evening program is scheduled to start at 7 p.m., with a



ON A PLATFORM in the 3400 block of Avenue Q here Friday night, members of the Angela Seguras Quad Cities Dance Group were a colorful part of the Mexican Fiesta. The group is scheduled to return tonight, as the fiesta continu
Photo (Additional pictures on Page 2.)

Democrat Sat. Sept. 18, 1976 p1

No. 29,545 — 108th Year

SATURDAY, SEPT

1976: Mexican Fiesta Mexican queen candidates (left-Anna Marie Hernandez and Diane Estrada. Candidates for American queen Roxanna Lane (third from left), Linda Dain (right).

Fort Madison Evening Democrat Newspaper Archives, August 26 1976 Page 1

No. 29,526 — 108th Year
FORT MADISON, IOWA 52627
THURSDAY, AUGUST 26, 1976
Price 15¢



MEXICAN FIESTA plans are underway here for the celebration Sept. 17 and 18 in the 3400 block of Avenue Q here. Candidates for Mexican Queen of the fiesta are Anna Marie Hernandez (left), 14, of 3425 Avenue Q and Diane Estrada, 14, of 1404 Thirty-ninth Street. Candidates for American Queen are Roxanna Lane (third from left), 14, of 2901 Avenue M and Linda Dains (right), 15, of 3401 Avenue L. Fiesta plans are being made by a committee headed by Lupe Mendez, president; Dan Garcia, vice president; Sebastian Alvarez, treasurer, and Lupe Reyes, secretary. Master of ceremonies for the fiesta is Frank Diaz. — Evening Democrat Photo.

!981 Mexican Fiesta poster.



The Fort Madison Mexican Fiesta queen tradition continues.



Left: 1972 “Four Generations.” Gambino Juarez born in 1875 in Chihuahua, Mexico, after serving in the Mexican army he migrated to El Paso, TX., where he became foremen of city’s water department. After serving in the US army during WWI, he migrated to Fort Madison in 1919 and worked for the Santa Fe until 1940 when he retired. Right: 1975 Gambino celebrated 100th birthday.



FOUR GENERATIONS are pictured here as Gabino Juarez celebrated his 97th birthday Sunday at his residence, 1404 Thirty-sixth Street. On the left is Raymond Prado, a great grandson, Mrs. Bart Prado, a granddaughter, is behind the chair, on the right is John Juarez of Burlington, a son of Gabino. A family dinner was held at noon to commemorate the birthday. — Evening Democrat Photo.



GABINO JUAREZ
— Evening Democrat Photo

100 on Saturday

Gabino Juarez, 1404 Thirty-sixth Street, will become a centenarian on Saturday.
A retired Santa Fe railroad employe, Mr. Juarez was born March 1, 1875, in Chihuahua, Mexico.
After spending his youth and early adulthood in Mexico and after service in the Mexican army, he migrated to El Paso, Texas, where he was employed in the city's Water Works rising to the position of foreman.
He served with the U. S. Army during World War I and came to Fort Madison in 1919 upon employment with the Santa Fe. He retired from the Santa Fe in 1940.
His wife died in 1965 at the age of 81.
Mr. Juarez has three sons, John and Chita, both of Burlington, and Rufino, of Keokuk; two daughters, Juanita and Simona, both at home; and seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren. One son is deceased.
A family gathering is planned at the Juarez home to observe Mr. Juarez' 100th birthday.

May 1984: LULAC Club *Cinco de Mayo* event with Mass and introduction of Mexican Fiesta queen candidates.



Fort Madison Daily Democrat Newspaper Archives May 4, 1984

Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Sat., May 5

Lulac Club, 1424-36th St.
Fort Madison

MASS at 11:00 a.m.

Serving Mexican food from noon to 6 p.m.

Dance to the El Sol from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Mexican Fiesta Queen Candidates to be introduced. Anyone interested in Running for Queen call 372-2537 or 372-5207.

FOLKDANCERS FROM WESTERN ILL. UNIVERSITY OF MACOMB

Tickets $3 at the door or $2.50 in advance.

Sponsored by the 1984 Mexican Fiesta Committee

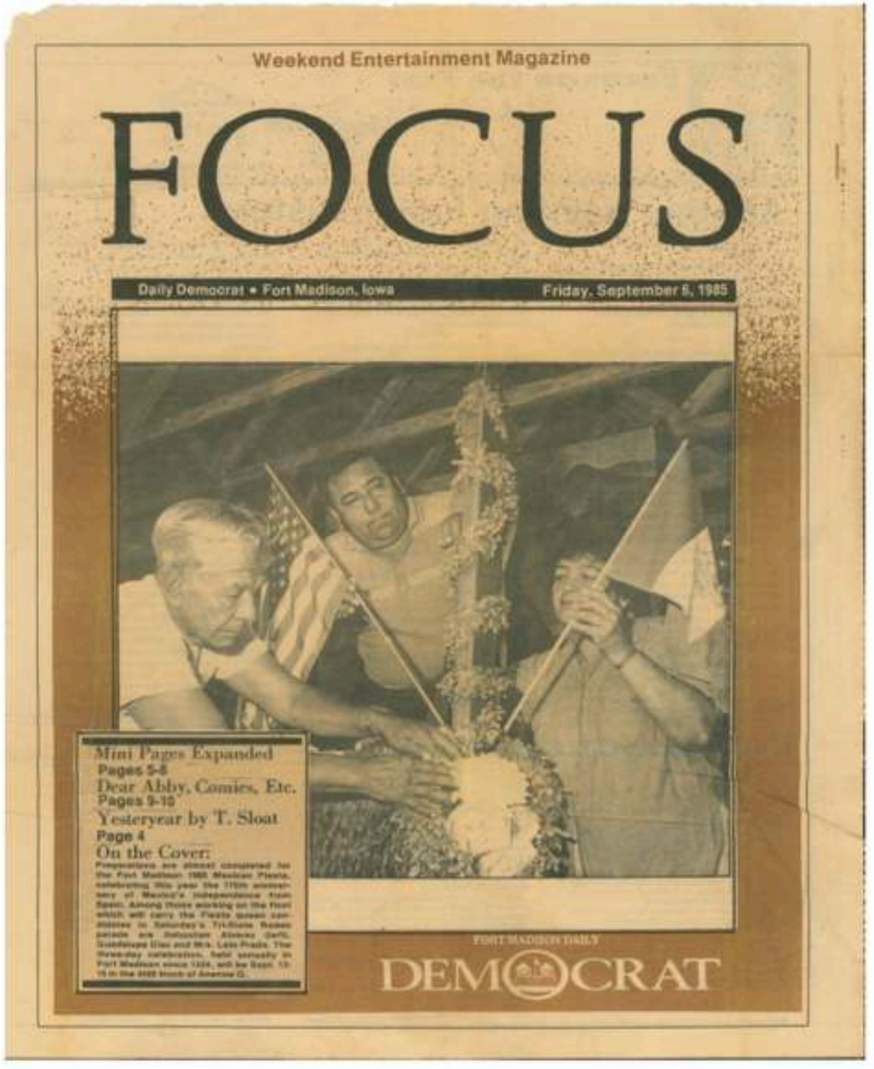
September 1985 Mexican Fiesta program.



1985: Mexican Fiesta vote ticket; 50 cents.



September 1985: Sebastian Alvarez (left), Guadalupe Diaz (center), and Mrs. Leo Prado decorate the float that carried the Fiesta queen in the Tri-State Rodeo parade.



Weekend Entertainment Magazine

FOCUS

Daily Democrat • Fort Madison, Iowa — Friday, September 6, 1985

Mini Pages Expanded
Pages 5-8
Dear Abby, Comics, Etc.
Pages 9-10
Yesteryear by T. Sloat
Page 4
On the Cover:

FORT MADISON DAILY DEMOCRAT

Early 1990s" left to right: Isidra Borjas, Isabella Lozano-Dobbs, and Alexis Lozano-Dobbs, members of Fort Madison Fiesta Dance Troupe. One of the dances performed was *Las Coronelas,* in honor of women who fought in the Mexican Revolution.



1993: “September 1922 was the first year for an organized fiesta committee. The first fiestas were held on the Santa Fe railroad property between 28th and 32nd streets in an area the people of the village called *El Cometa.* A flood in 1922 forced the residents to leave and move to 34th and Avenue Q … Aside from WWII years, when there was no Fiesta, it has been held there ever since. In 1984, the Fiesta committee organized and became a non-profit organization and bought the property at 34th and Avenue Q to ensure the Fiesta would stay in the future.



Mexican Fiesta opens Thursday

By Tracey North
Of The Democrat

The annual Mexican Fiesta runs Thursday through Saturday in Fort Madison and its roots can be traced as far back as 1906. The fiesta is a celebration held every year on this September weekend to commemorate the Independence of Mexico.

September 1922 was the first year for an organized fiesta committee. The first fiestas were held on Santa Fe railroad property between 28th and 32nd streets in an area the people of the village called *El Cometa.* A flood in 1922 forced the residents to leave and move to 34th and Avenue Q.

Aside from World War II years, when there was no Fiesta, it has been held there every since. In 1984, the Fiesta committee organized and became a non-profit organization, and in 1985 bought the property at 34th and Avenue Q to ensure the Fiesta would stay in the future.

This year's festivities begin at 4 p.m. Thursday. Committee member Pam Lozano said a few food vendors would begin serving around 4 p.m. and a street dance would start at 7 featuring music by *Los Muchachos.*

Friday, the Fiesta gets into full swing beginning at noon. Featured all three days will be Mexican food vendors, a beer garden, and a carnival.

A Catholic Mass will be celebrated at 4:30 p.m. Friday and the Grand Entrance is at 6 p.m. This Grand Entrance will feature Mexican American Veterans of Foreign Wars Color Guard, Mexican Fiesta officers, guests of honor, queens and escorts, and Father Brownsfield.

Lozano said the Fiesta queens will be crowned Friday evening at 7. Two queens are crowned — one for Mexico and one for America. Queen candidates this year are Janet Caudillo, a senior at Aquinas High School and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Caudillo; and Norma Diaz, a senior at Fort Madison High School and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Guadalupe Diaz.

Lozano said in the past, queen candidates would sell tickets to raise money for the Fiesta and the candidate with the most amount of money would be crowned queen. Lozano said this has resulted in fewer candidates and this year they are returning to judging on questions asked by the judges at the dance Thursday evening. "We want the queen to be something the girls can be proud of," Lozano said.

After the queen coronation Friday, Dr. Alfonso Vera will speak on the history of independence in Mexico and the Mexican Act of Independence, and a street dance will begin at 9 p.m. Featured entertainment for the dance will be The Latin Rhythms.

The final activity Friday evening is *El Grito De Independencia* (A Cry for Freedom).

Saturday will also have a grand entrance at 6 p.m. and guest speaker Angel Martinez will sing the National Anthem. The Fiesta will come to a close with a street dance at 9 p.m. Saturday featuring The Latin Rhythms.

Both days feature folkloric dancers, guest speakers and the FMHS Vocalists singing the Mexican National Anthem.

1999: Hesiquia Salazar with daughter Mary Prado about the “old days in Mexico” and life at the Santa Fe boxcar camp. Oral history has helped preserve the saga of the Fort Madison Mexican Village.



Burlington Hawkeye Dec 5, 1999 p 67

The Hawk Eye • Sunday • December 5, 1999 http://www.thehawkeye.com

MEMOIR FOR THE MILLENNIUM

Fort Madison

Displaced immigrants find a new home

By Carolyn Noah
Special to The Hawk Eye

"Each family was given a boxcar, a cooktop stove and coal or wood-burning heater."

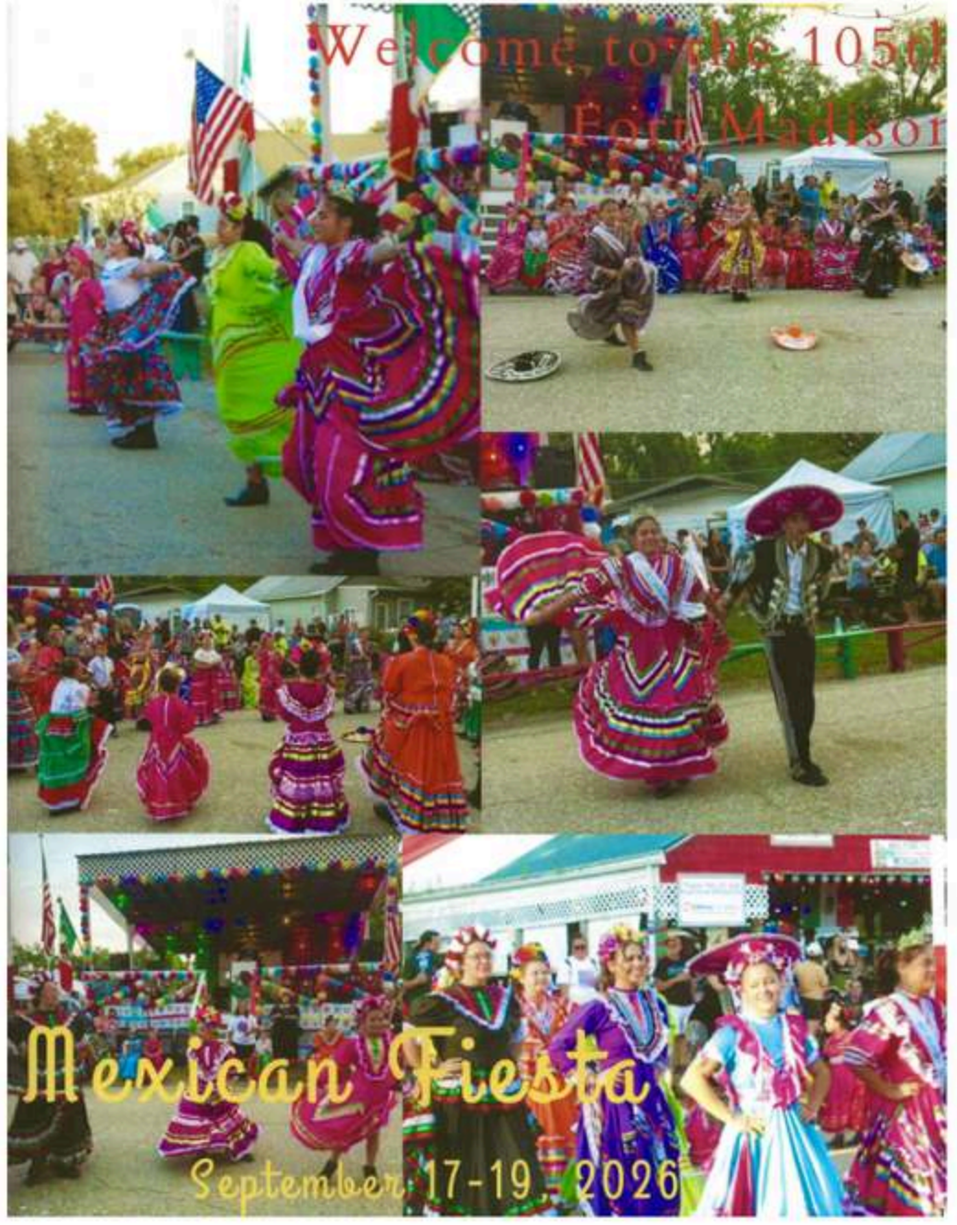
Carolyn Noah

Hesiquia Salazar (left) remembers the old days in Mexico with her daughter Lucy Prado.

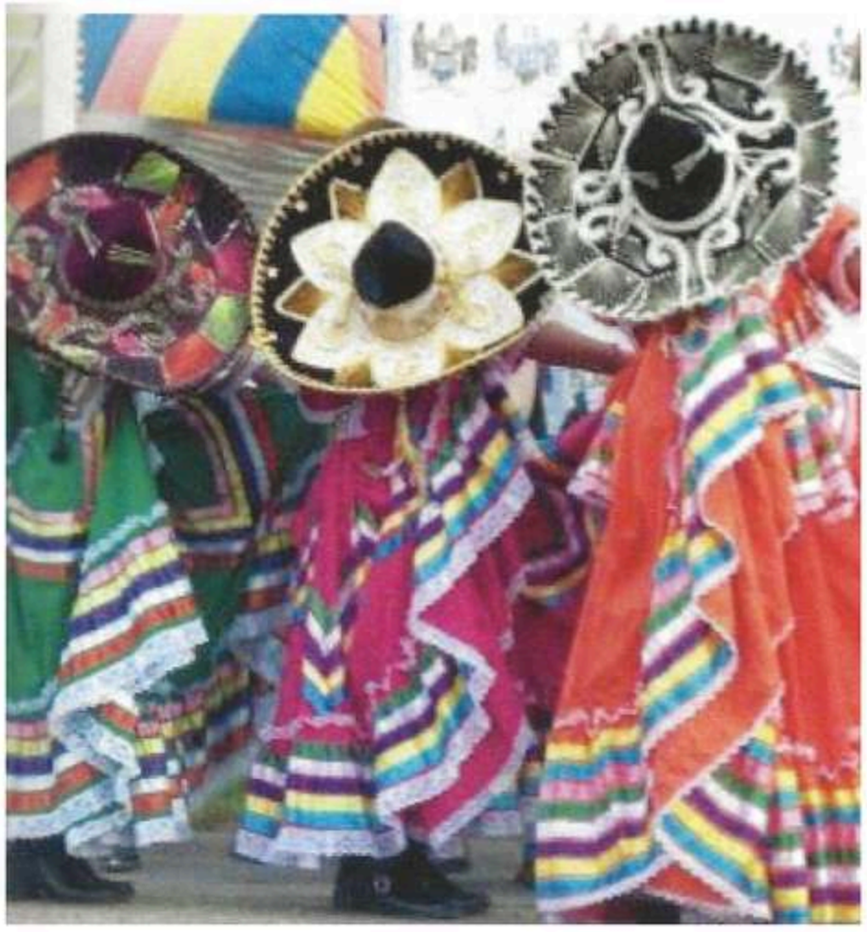
PROUD SPONSOR OF THE FORT MADISON

20 26

MEXICAN FIESTA









FORT MADISON MEXICAN FIESTA: PRESERVING HISTORY, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY IN THE MEXICAN VILLAGE SINCE 1909





