



The Barbary Times



West Hills College North District Center Student Press

March, 2007

4th Edition

West Hills College Holds Annual Rodeo and Fund Raiser



Celebrating its number one national ranking and a new home at the Farm of the Future, the West Hills College Coalinga rodeo team and booster's club has had an eventful spring with numerous activities, according to Coach Bruce Hunt.

The boosters started the activities on Saturday, Feb. 24th, at the Elks' Lodge. Featured was a prime rib dinner catered by Cambridge Inn, followed by a silent and live auction. Proceeds will benefit the rodeo team's travel expenses as well as scholarships, Hunt said.



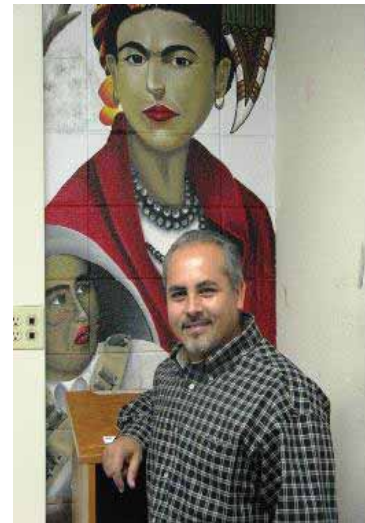
The rodeo students brought in a variety of quality items for the auction, items that held great appeal to all buyers. Past auction items have included a trophy pig hunt and a variety of guns and rifles.

The winner received a Diamond Back "L" Series Gun Safe, valued at \$1,600. Dorn said the 24-gun safe is fireproof for 60 minutes.

continued on page5

Falcon Voices

By Oskar Casarreal



Most of the students here at WHC NDC know Mr. Rubio now works on the Coalinga campus. Juan Rubio was the Camp Program adviser. Recently, he was transferred to West Hills College Coalinga and is no longer with us. *The Barbary Times* asked students how they feel about Mr. Rubio's absence, and this is what they had to say:

continued on page3

What's Inside?

- Tech Corner..... pg 2*
- Fire Storypg 3*
- Falcons View..... pg 4*
- American Dreampg 6*
- Cases of Real Life..... pg 7*
- Birds With No Winds.....pg 8*



Tech Corner

Here is the infamous Tech Corner again, with the all-popular reporter and Editor, Manauri Marquez. So what is this I have been hearing about a new phone that is not just a GSM phone? Upon some investigation, this thing blew my mind.

It's a WATCH!!! It's called the M300, and it is one of the coolest things that I have seen in my technological life.

This phone is scheduled to ship out worldwide in March, but there might be another delay, as there was before. This phone speaks for itself. Here are some specs:

- Main chipset : MTK
- Memory : 64MB
- Features:
- Voice Bluetooth
- MP3 Player
- Internal antenna
- USB Port for connection to Personal computer
- 40 embedded true tones
- Emergency Call Button
- Fully Functional 99 number memory Phonebook
- GSM SIM Card
- External Speaker Phone
- Fully Functional SMS capabilities
- Wireless Bluetooth Data Transfer
- Bluetooth Dial Up Networking (DUN)
- Talk time: 200 min
- Standby: 80 Hours
- Mode: GSM/GPRS 900/1800/1900 MHz Tri mode (HW)
- GSM/GPRS 900/1800/1900 MHz Tri mode (SW)
- Dimensions: 43 x 56 x 14.8 mm (with 500mA Battery)
- Weight: 45g
- Phone Color: Pastel Blue & Pink, Baby Blue & Pink, Navy Blue,
- Electric Blue, Red, Yellow, Black and Grey
- Display: Color OLED Screen 1.01 inches
- **Look out, James Bond!**

**THIS POEM IS
NOT DRUG
AFFILIATED**

Mind's Eye *IT'S AN EMOTIONAL TRIP.*
By Manauri Marquez

Did you have a good trip? Good enough to open the mind's eye and the door to the corridor of new thoughts and desires? Good enough to cleanse your mind and create pure obscene realities and for them to come true to push on through to the other side and suddenly grow wings. To fly away with a harmonious sound, to fly away from your problems and cares? To finally get peace, relaxation, nothingness, darkness, shadow's death? So did you have a good trip, good enough to create the perfect utopia in your sublet insane mind. A utopia of sullen and depressed minds? Was it so good that you foresaw and understood God's will, and received the power to really go into your mind and bring out your impure thoughts and contemplate them to bring out the thunderous rains of anger and to really deal with them. Was it so good...good enough to end your life? Did you have a good world when you died, so good that the trip was worth it?

Sports



Greetings, soccer fans. Here is the latest in the world of professional soccer: With Coach Fabio Capello having discarded Los Angeles-bound David Beckham, and with Ronaldo reportedly set for a return to Italy with AC Milan, Real had begun ditching its

superstar image, signing young stars such as Argentinian pair Gonzalo Higuain and Fernando Gago.

Being asked about the future of 31-year-old Beckham and 30-year-old Ronaldo, Mijatovic said Real wanted a transfer fee for the Brazilian. Saudi side Al-Ittihad have complicated matters by offering 10 million euros.

"Real Madrid cannot allow Ronaldo to go for nothing. We had an offer for him in the summer, but the management decided along with the coach not to let him go.

"But in the end, we realized things weren't working out as we had thought. That's the situation, and we'll see what emerges in the days remaining to the end of the transfer window," Mijatovic told the reporters at RealMadrid.com.

On Beckham, Mijatovic acknowledged the former England star wants to play a part with six months left on his contract before he joins MSL side Los Angeles Galaxy.

"Like a lot of players who have done big things for our club, he wants to play but there are youngsters who are also very promising.

"I think these youngsters have the advantage at Real Madrid over the players who have been here several years," Mijatovic said.

He also added that it was up to Capello if Beckham were to play again for the club.

With Real's weekend win at Real Mallorca moving the side joint top with Barcelona and Seville, Mijatovic said, "The team is showing a lot of personality.

"Now we must make sure we stay up there in the league as well as in the Champions League and gradually get a bit better match by match."

Falcon Voices

By Oskar Casarreal

continued from page 1

Silvia C: "It would be nice to have him back because he was a big support for the Spanish speaking students."

Mario V: "Se siente mal."

Stephanie A: "They should bring him back!"

Mayra M: "Mr. Rubio was always there for his students. He even helped me one time to find a job. He was a counselor to me, and he was a friend to his students."

Sanjuana P: "I feel that students greatly feel his absence."

Questions and Answers asked to Mr. Rubio

Q: "How do you feel being transferred to West Hills College Coalinga?"

Mr. Rubio: "I think is a great opportunity for me to explore other areas and meet new people and staff, as well as to participate in other activities."

Q: "Do you miss WHC NDC?"

Mr. Rubio: "Yes- yes, I used to assist many students with different needs."

Q: "What message would you like share with the students who miss you?"

Mr. Rubio: "In life, we have to be prepared for changes and we have to accept new challenges!"

Q: "Will you come and visit?"

Mr. Rubio: "Yes I'll be coming every once in a while. If students want to get a hold of me, they can do it by my email or phone. I will always be available for any student who might have questions."

The students of WHC NDC would like to thank Mr. Rubio for his support, and they wish him luck at WHC Coalinga. Students needing any type of help can still find it with our other two counselors, Marlese Roton (also our campus dean), and Alicia Rocha. They are both here for the students of NDC, so if you have questions or anything you need help with, be sure to give them a visit.

juanrubio@westhillscollge.com or (559) 934-2986

Fire breaks out, killing 10 people.



A Bardstown firefighter is shown inside a house where a fire broke out early Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2007, in Bardstown, KY, killing 10 people, six of them children, and leaving two others hospitalized, authorities said. (AP Photo/Patti Longmire)

The fire took the lives of 4 adults and 6 children.

So far, the autopsies have shown that all ten victims died from smoke inhalation. Two survivors were hospitalized, but their lives are not in danger.

The cause of the fire was said to be a cigarette that was left on a chair and forgotten. The fire department had found an ashtray near the chair and a burn pattern that shows where the fire must have started.

A smoke detector was found, but investigators were unable to determine if it worked. None of the neighbors recalled hearing a smoke alarm go off," said Goodwin, the chief deputy fire marshal.

Investigators declined to say which of the victims left the cigarette but mentioned that some of the adults in the house were regular smokers.

"The cigarette burned for about 40 minutes, which produced toxic smoke, before anybody noticed the fire began spreading to furniture and walls, then engulfed the house," said Goodwin.

From where the victims were found, it appears they were trying to escape the fire, but they couldn't get out," Goodwin said.

It only takes a couple of breaths of this toxic smoke to cause serious damage to the body. Now the legislature of Kentucky is requiring cigarettes sold in Kentucky to be made of fire-safe paper, which causes cigarettes to go out when left alone. This will save lives, and so far, six other states are following suit..



The Falcon's View

The Opportunity of a Lifetime

You know something about hopes, dreams, and opportunities, don't you? You know or you wouldn't be here at West Hills College, chasing after those things. You know something about seizing an opportunity, so I trust you will understand what I am about to say. What I'll tell you is nothing that hasn't already crossed your mind in some fashion. If you're like me, however, you need to hear it fresh now and again, to clarify your view of life. The windshield through which we view our life journey must be wiped clean periodically. So give me a few minutes, and I'll put my squeegee to work.

What should be at the heart of your West Hills experience is this: high hopes turned to life realities. So here you are in Hope Central, that place in life where you finally give voice to your most daring aspirations. Right now—this time in your life—is your opportunity to begin creating a life that is strong and beautiful, built on the backbone of your character. Now is your chance to live a life of true meaning and rich adventure, of heart-crashing love and belly-aching laughter, a life of sorrows turned to joy and defeats turned to victory. This is it, and your education lies at the center of it all.

I have known people near the end of their time on earth who view their lives with shame—some for what they've done, but most for what they have *not* done. These people made no use of their one greatest ability—the ability to *choose*. Their slowing hearts beat mostly in anguish now, because they squandered the most stunning of all human powers—the power of *choice*. Their time is nearly gone, and there are no do-overs. What they *can* do is try not to think about it, for to think about having wasted your life is to stew in bitter regret. Depressing, isn't it?

The good news is this: you don't have to stew in anything. Know why? Because of that power I just mentioned: CHOICE. Choice is your most devastating weapon against a dull, mediocre, hollow life. Do not underestimate the power of choice to improve your life, nor the power of *non-choice* to ruin it. Consider that for a moment.

Choice gives you the power to build a life of grace, wonder, and vivacity. It gives you the ability to persevere and the strength to do right when wrong is so much easier. Choice is the authority to write the story of your own life, no matter what the world throws at you. And here's a thought: Of all God's creatures, only one possesses the power to *choose* its actions at every turn. That creature is the human. That creature is *you*.

So think about this: in the whole history of this universe, there will only be one you—EVER! Only *you* will ever choose what you will do and who you will be. Your choices alone will take your life where it goes and make it what it becomes. No one else can ever make those choices. That, dear friend, is real power, and it is the one power *nobody* can ever take from you.

Only a few ever take full advantage of their power of choice. Those who don't usually spend the end of their days tormented by regret—for the choices they never made, the life they never lived. *Your* opportunities, however, are still in reach.

That is, they are in reach for now. Make no mistake: The possibilities that presently exist for you will slip away when you're not looking. So choose now to be the one who will someday look back on a life lived in full, brilliant color. Be one who looks back with pride upon a life lived with honor and dignity, love and courage—a life lived right, with few if any regrets—one that put action to dreams and made them real. Be the person who once lived a life that could not help but make world better.

There's a catch, however: you *cannot* wait. If you wait to live this life of passion and purpose, you *will* look back someday and realize that time has sneaked by and left you to grieve. In the vast ages of this universe, you aren't given much time. What time you are given is a hairsbreadth at most—in the scope of eternity, a *mere speck*. But here's the part I love: that speck is *your* speck.

This time is yours—to be to others what you wish others had been to you, to do what others *wish* they had done, to be the force on this earth that you were always meant to be. More importantly, this brief moment you have—you'd best make it good, because you're trading something of enormous value for it: *Your life*. You will make it a good trade, won't you?

Someday you'll have wrinkles and gray hair or only a little hair. Your body will be a dim reflection of what it once was, and your mind may have rusted. It will seem like yesterday that you were here, with this breathtaking field of possibilities before you; but you'll see how time has flitted by, and how all those magnificent possibilities have disappeared. Depressing?

Absolutely not! Not if you know that you have lived with your whole heart and that you never let envy, greed, or fear (especially fear) make your choices for you. No, because then you can hold your head high and smile. You'll breathe in deeply and give a friendly nod to the world you made better. Opportunities vanished are *okay*...if once upon a time, they were opportunities *taken*.

Of course, choice does invite risk. You know this, correct? Expect failures and hurts. They're coming as surely as the sun rises. Best face it now: when you make a habit of choosing freely and boldly, you really are asking for it. The life fully lived is not for sissies. Yes, respect the possibility of disaster, but do not let that respect turn to a fear that paralyzes you. If you will let your calamities teach you, they will become *temporary* setbacks that ultimately strengthen you for the rest of your journey. If you determine in your heart that no failure or setback will ever *defeat* you, then they never will.

I say all this to tell you one thing: friend, don't blow it. Right here, right now, bring out the sword of CHOICE, your deadliest weapon against a half-hearted, flavorless life that touches no one. Take that sword from the timid shadows out into the brilliant light of day and swing it with conviction. For a short while, the opportunity of *your lifetime* is right here for the taking. So what are you waiting for?

That is the Falcon's view.

Anna Nicole Smith *By Yesenia Estrada*

On Thursday February 8, 2007, model, actress, and celebrity Anna Nicole Smith passed away at the age of 39. She was known for marrying an older man, being in *Playboy*, and being in a few movies and TV shows. Anna Nicole Smith even had her own T.V. show called "The Anna Nicole Show." And of course, we have all heard, "Trimspa Baby!" in her recent commercials as Trimspa's spokesperson.

Everyone knows Anna Nicole Smith as a celebrity but do we all really know about her before she became a celebrity? Here are some facts. Vickie Lynn Hogan was born on November 28, 1967 in Houston, Texas. She would later be known as Anna Nicole Smith. She was the only child of Donald Eugene Hogan and Virgie Mae Tabers; she did however have half siblings. On November 4, 1969, Anna's parents got divorced and her father left. Her mother and maternal aunt Elaine Tabers raised Anna.

While growing up, Ana told others she wanted to be the next Marilyn Monroe. Anna moved from Houston to Mexia, Texas when she was in the ninth grade. She failed her freshman year at Mexia High School, dropped out her sophomore year, and never progressed past an eighth grade education.

Anna later got a job at as a waitress at Jim's Krispy Fried Chicken in Mexia, were she met Billy Wayne Smith, who became her husband. Anna was 17 years old and Billy was only 16 when they were married on April 4, 1985. The next year Anna gave birth to her son Daniel Wayne Smith. Anna and Billy later seperated in the year 1987. Anna moved to Houston with her son Daniel, she worked at Wal Mart, Red Lobster and then became a stripper at a nightclub in Houston.

How did this young mom become famous? Anna decided to enter some photos of herself into a contest that was being held by *Playboy*. Hugh Hefner then called her and she appeared on the cover of the March 1992 issue of *Playboy*. She was subsequently called "the next Marilyn Monroe," in press reports. Even though Anna Nicole Smith had done *Playboy*, she went back to working at a strip club in Houston. That is were she met oil billionaire J. Howard Marshall, and where they began a relationship.

Even though she had left Billy, she. was still legally married to him. On February 3, 1993, she finally made it official and divorced Billy. She was now free to marry Howard Marshall. They got married on June 27, 1994 in Houston. Anna Nicole Smith was then 26 years old, and Howard was 89 years old. Anna Nicole Smith got a lot of bad publicity for marrying an older man and was being called a "gold digger." No one believed that she really loved Howard Marshall. On August 4, 1995 thirteen months after their marriage, Howard Marshall passed away.

After his death Anna Nicole Smith had to go to court over her claim for half of her late husband's 1.6 billion dollar estate. This case lasted over a decade. On May 1, 2006, the justices unanimously decided in favor of Anna Nicole Smith. The decision did not give her a portion of her husband's estate, but affirmed her right to pursue a share of it in federal court.

Anna Nicole Smith appeared in films such as *The Hudsucker Proxy*, *Naked Gun*, *To the Limit*, *Skyscraper*, *Wasabi Tuna*, *Be Cool*, and *Illegal Aliens*.

Anna Nicole Smith has gone through a lot of controversy and a lot of scandals, and even now that she has passed on, there is still a big controversy over who really fathered her daughter Danielynn.
To Be Continued...

West Hills College Plans Annual Rodeo and Fund Raiser

continued from page 1

The WHC College Rodeo is scheduled for the first weekend of April, according to Hunt, and will be held on the new rodeo grounds, which are currently under construction at the Farm of the Future north of Coalinga on Gale Avenue. The \$3 million in proceeds from the sale of the old school farm near the center of Coalinga are being used to build new facilities for the rodeo team and farm.

The rodeo will feature teams from colleges and universities throughout California and Nevada. The rodeo begins on Friday night with top competitors moving to the championship round on Saturday to determine event and team champions. Competition will include men and women's roping, wrestling, bronc riding, barrel racing and bull riding.

The weekend's activities end on Sunday with the 12th annual Bad Girl's Breakaway Roping, which features the nation's top female ropers competing for cash prizes and awards.

Commentary on community college completion rates

By Dr. Frank Gornick, Chancellor, West Hills Community College District

Francisco Torres is on his way to achieving the American dream. After moving to Corcoran as a high school student, Francisco graduated and then improved his skills in English, math and science at West Hills College Lemoore as he prepared to attend the University of California, Davis to pursue his goal of becoming a doctor.

Like most community college students, Francisco took more than the standard four semesters to graduate from West Hills. But in doing so, he saved himself and his family somewhere in the neighborhood of \$30,000-\$40,000—the difference in price between attending a community college or attending a UC for the first two years.

California's higher education system is the envy of the world because of success stories like Francisco's. California's community colleges serve two million people annually—workers who support one of the strongest economies in the world. Like Francisco, students

continue to climb the economic ladder utilizing the skills gained at the community colleges.

Francisco recently sent an email to WHCL staff members reflecting the sentiments of many, "Thank you for believing in me and giving me the opportunity to pursue my dream (of becoming a medical doctor)."

Community college students come from all walks of life and all socio-economic backgrounds. Their average age is closer to 30 than it is to 20 and many have busy lives that may include full or part-time jobs, spouses, children, disabilities or a lack of English language skills.

Half a century ago, students like Francisco were generally denied the opportunity to attend college. It was for the children of wealthy families who could afford to send their children to colleges and universities—frequently far from home and beyond the means of all but a privileged few.

But the Master Plan for Higher Education changed all that in the 1960s by providing a low-cost alternative through a system of local community colleges located across the state. The idea was that these colleges would support the base of the pyramid of higher education. They would offer vocational training and the first two years of classes for those interested in baccalaureate programs.

That system continues to work well today, with more than half of California State University graduates and a quarter of University of California graduates starting college at their local community college—saving money for themselves, their parents and taxpayers.

Despite all the positive results, a recent report that garnered press was critical of community colleges for their lack of graduation and transfer rates—based on completion within six years.

Six years may seem like a long time to earn a "two-year" degree, however most students work while attending school to support their families, attend school part time, or need to master remedial math and English skills.

These barriers are real to students like Francisco. Last year, West Hills Community College District graduated almost 600 students with degrees or certificates. Many of these rural students completed college because of the convenient location and accessibility that West Hills offers.

Today, more than 50 percent of these 2006 graduates are attending a four-year college somewhere else and they are well poised to take their roles in a society where higher levels of education are in demand. Francisco is at U.C. Davis now taking pre-med courses and looking forward to doing research in antibodies.

It takes a conversation with someone like Francisco Torres to understand the value and opportunities made available by community colleges.

Instead of attacking a system that works for state residents, policy makers need to advocate for creating more educational opportunities for all residents. Prosperity and economic vitality are the strength and by-product of a network of low-cost colleges accessible to all Californians.

What is Dating Abuse?

By Allison Miller

There are many ways you can identify abuse.

Dating abuse can be as small as one partner making demands of personal or family time. There can be simple signs to recognize if you or a friend might be in an abusive relationship. To begin, a partner may ask for things like more time alone or may act jealous of people who are spending time with you. This can be time at home with family members. An abusive partner may pay much attention to the clothes worn or the positive attitude in public and ask for changes that seem unreasonable. Changes in style are one thing; changes in normal behavior is completely different. An abusive partner may become stern or even punishing in verbal or physical ways when the abused partner is not complying requests for changes.

It should be said that abuse can go without notice. A violent partner make act overtly kind or pleasant in public. Violence in any form is unhealthy and should be a signal to leave a relationship.

Dating abuse is domestic violence. Do you know that text messaging is the newest and one of the most abusive new forms dating abuse? Text messaging and checking to see a partner is home and asking a partner to call on a high frequency is abuse. Internet and text messaging can act as an invisible leash and can interrupt regular activities. Making demands is one form of verbal abuse. Verbal abuse is actual belittling, intimidation and yelling or cursing.

Physical abuse includes hitting, punching, kicking, slapping, spitting and shoving anyone. Physical bruises and viewable markings are not always present. Physical violence is usually tied to emotional abuse and or sexual abuse. A victim may attempt to cover the violence with clothing or makeup but also by cancelling plans and desire to not attend normal daily actions like work or class.

Sexual abuse includes sexual coercion to get intimacy and forcing anyone into a sexual act. No one has to give themselves without permission or the right to decide.

continued on.....7



Cases of the Real Life

By Rosa Espinoza

We've all heard cases of love, lust, crushes, break-ups, and cheating. Well, here is a true case that happened not too long ago, to a young woman who will remain anonymous.



Let me just start by saying this was a very beautiful girl whom many guys were after, but those guys did not interest her because she had a crush of her own. The guy was gorgeous and very popular. She was really into him. Every time she would see him, she would feel very happy inside.

The crush came to a point where they started talking more than usual. He would casually invite her to eat, and they would go to the movies, or if not that, they would just hang out at each others' house, like normal friends would. Though she was feeling more than friendship, yet she she was really terrified of being hurt.

Time passed and they slowly stopped seeing each other. This seemed really weird to her, because she could not get him off her mind. Time passed, and she really missed him but pride drove her not to talk to him anymore. It seemed he was becoming a know-it-all.

She soon met another guy who was very sweet and very nice to everyone. He seemed full of life and joy. His days seemed filled with pure happiness, and his laughter was very sweet. Towards the beginning of their friendship, everything went well, and he fell deeply in love with her. After this moment, he thought of no one else but her.

Then the day came when he couldn't take it any longer. He wanted to ask her out but could not find a way. He was really afraid of rejection, so he started off by sending flirtatious text messages by phone. She thought this was really cute and loved it. She didn't think anything bad of it. This kept going on for a while, but he still did not have the guts to ask her out.

One day he finally did ask her if she could meet him at a certain place because he needed to talk with her really seriously. She knew what this was all about. She knew he was going to ask her out, so when they met up, before he could say anything, she started off by saying that she loved him so much, but only as a friend and she would not want to do anything to hurt him. She also said that if this was about him asking her out, she would rather be friends. Later on, something went wrong and the two ended up enemies.

Since he was a very sentimental guy, he took that moment deeply to heart. It hurt him so much he took it as a rejection. For a couple of months, he was a totally different person who said everything goes wrong. He hated himself for even trying.

Finally, however, he got to the point where he would rather have her as a really good, honest, close friend than to not have her at all.

He could have stayed negative, but he decided to be bigger than his hurt feelings, and both of them gained a wonderful friend. That's not a perfect ending, but it's not bad either.

What is Dating Abuse?

By Alison Miller

The last form of abuse is emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse includes manipulation, intimidation and even convincing someone that they are to blame for the abuse or situation. One red flag to an abusive situation is an abusive partner's conviction that they are the one who's innocent because they were angered by the victim's non-compliance to abusive demands or physical violence.

Dating abuse is on the rise and is not gender bias. Men and women are victims of dating abuse and domestic violence. There are teens and young adults that have died from not leaving soon enough. Please if you or a friend is possible victims of abuse of any sort talk to someone quickly. Here at West Hills College NDC you can talk with a teacher or staff member one on one before a class or sign in to see Marlese Roton without any questions. Also you can visit Firebaugh Crisis Center or make an anonymous appointment to get help if you are involved in an abusive partner.

Violence is not okay for you or anyone

continued from page 6



Birds With No Winds

By Silvia Cortez



To fly very far, a bird needs good winds. People are no different. We all need a little help to get to where our hearts yearn to be. That help is like the winds that keep us up in the air. When people immigrate to other countries, they lack many things. We are birds with no winds. Once you are here, you can't go back with your family or loved ones no matter what is going on in your home nation. You must stay put because of your immigrant status. Immigrants, who go back to Mexico and return to California, are lucky because they have good jobs and good bosses by their sides, with open arms to help them in their return. Otherwise, they would have to start all over again. It is really hard to obtain those privileges by being an immigrant.

My family and I immigrated to California in 1991, and we have missed several things that had happened with our family in Mexico. We have missed various funerals of relatives in Mexico and quite a few quinceneras. Those are moments that we want to share with our loved ones, but it's impossible because we are undocumented. We lost my aunt Lupe, my uncle Salvador and my niece Karla's funeral. We didn't have the opportunity to be with them in their last moments or see them for the last time. Sometimes it is the same way for them; when something like that occurs with us, they can't come here either. I'm saying this because of a personal experience, when my husband passed away, his family couldn't assist at his funeral. They couldn't afford it, and they didn't have the documents they needed in order to travel to California, so my husband's sisters couldn't see him for the last time. It is really sad not being able to share those moments only because of a document. Sometimes people don't understand that we become more depressed because of the opportunities we seek in a country that isn't ours.

Karla passed away, and for our family, it was one of the hardest moments because we couldn't be with her when she was fighting for her life and when she passed away. We couldn't be at her funeral either. Also, it was harder because she struggled throughout her life. She was young and had many dreams of a good future. When she was around ten years old, a doctor found that she had leukemia. We knew that she was sick and that she needed our help, so we helped her family with money. We helped her with her medicines and with treatment for the leukemia. It was the only thing we could do for her. Her leukemia was controlled, but she was in and out of the hospital. It was sad that we couldn't be there to help her survive.

After her leukemia was being controlled, she knew she was in great danger of dying, so she told my sister that she wanted a quincenera before she passed away. My sister and other people, including my family, helped her to have a big quincenera, but we missed that too. One day, Karla got sick, and a specialist found that her heart was too weak, so she needed another one soon. She was waiting for her heart, and again, we could do nothing but to help her with money.

She was in and out of the hospital for 1 year. The specialist found out that she had cirrhosis, and they didn't know how much time she had to live. Three months after being diagnosed with cirrhosis, she died.

Once more, my sister was in Mexico by herself, and her hopes flew away. In those sad and stressful moments, she needed us. We could go, but we knew that it was a choice between our future and her funeral. The cost was too great. It was our future or the end of it. It's really sad that in those moments we couldn't do anything. To fly very far birds need winds. Winds lift them up and make it possible for them to keep flying.

Being undocumented is like being a bird with no winds to help it fly. Immigrants are like birds without winds. I am always hopeful that someday the winds will come and we will be able to fly far and be free and able to go to our families and loved ones whenever they need us. We are waiting for the day when we can go back with our family and fly together.

An icy desert

By JuanR.

A sunny scorching day is what many travelers would expect when visiting the Southwest, but during these past few weeks of winter, many have found the surprise of a polar looking landscape covered in ice. To many of those trafficking on Interstate 10, it was a surprise to see a change from a red, martian looking landscape to a snowy one. For the locals, this may have been surprising, but for the unprepared travelers was an unexpected turn.

I had a chance to go through this experience, it was something many weren't prepared for and had to delay their trips by staying in hotels until the weather cleared. Along the way, I had the chance to see many people who were hauling trailers with light trucks, but without chains or 4X4, one of which caused an accident and blocked I-10 eastbound for at least 2 hours. The most dangerous part of the road were the semi-trucks that could go out of control and easily cause a pileup. The interstate was like a skating rink and there were some cars that were like novice skaters who tumbled off the road. Many who stayed in rest areas to rest during the night had to put up with the cold conditions and in the morning some drivers found that they could not open the door. This was because they pulled over to the shoulder of the road and when other vehicles passed by their side, the wind "slapped" ice into the small crevices of the doors so that they would not open. So if you're headed anywhere in



Immigration enforcement in Mendota

By Juan R.

Immigration raids and checkpoints are something you would expect to see only in border towns like Eagle Pass, Brownsville or San Diego, but in the first week of this past February, they paid a visit to Mendota. These raids began at 5 in the morning! This was just in time to do their job right when some farm laborers were getting ready to go to work. On that day, many people were afraid of leaving their homes for any reason. That was cause for many to not go to work. Farmers also lost out on a day of labor toward their crops. Apparently, these raids have continued onto the second week of this month and various farm labor vans have been intercepted and taken

away while some were on their way to work.

Major immigration raids have not been seen in the Central Valley since the 80's. But that doesn't mean they won't be back. When they come, they usually are looking for someone who already has an order from an immigration court do be deported. However, officers may ask anyone for documents to verify their legal status. I was told that those who have 'green cards' must carry it with them, and failure to comply may result in being arrested and paying a \$500 fine. So make sure you always have this document with you.

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