

ST. BONIFACE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHANDLER 4-H

Immigrant's legacy in Chandler recalled

Casimire Chavez
For The Statesman

My father was a very special person in my life. He was the most gentle, loving, though physically strong man I ever knew.

I marvel at what a happy and charismatic person he became in spite of the suffering in his life.

My father was orphaned at the age of 16 (about 1887) with his mother, two sisters, and a little brother to support in a poverty-ridden country devastated by a revolution, where rebels and ruralists were to be feared.

They suffered hunger as my father was unable to get to the city of Querajato from his mountain community to sell the charcoal he made, which was his only way of making a living.

His little brother died, unable to get any kind of medical attention. Upon telling of his hardships with hunger and poverty,

Dad would always add, "God helped us and we survived."

At 25 years old, Dad married my mother and got an opportunity to come to the United States with her uncle. After two years of difficulties in south Texas the little family — father, mother and his mother — came to Chandler. He started working for the railroad, and he did that until retirement.

He was a loving father to his three children. He dreamed of giving them the educational opportunities he never had.

He taught himself to read and was an avid reader. He would read to his older child and marveled that at age 5, she could read the Spanish newspaper better than he.

He wanted his children to attend school, but being the only Hispanic family in Chandler he was afraid his children would be discriminated against. So he rented an apartment in Waco and sent his family,

mother, wife and three children to live there so they could attend a Parochial school.

For two years, he went back and forth to see his family on weekends. He had a train pass, so he rode the 5 train Friday to Waco and returned by 5 Sunday.

Mr. Dingler, a good friend and head of the school board, encouraged my father to bring us back and enroll us in the Chandler school, assuring him we would not be harmed.

We prospered in Chandler and nothing made my father happier than to hear people compliment him on his children's achievements.

How happy he was to live to see his three children and a godson he later adopted attend college!

How happy he would be to know that among his children and grandchildren are two doctors, a dentist and dermatologist, a university professor, a pharmacist, two engineers; three teachers; two regis-

tered nurses, two Marines, and other honorable professions — all due to his emphasis on education.

For this loving, gentle soul who taught us so much about faith in God, love and respect of self, love for others, and respect for all, there was one thing to do to honor him.

My sister and I gave the land he left us, of which he was so proud, to build a church for the worship of the God he so loved and honored.

We named the church after his saint name so he'll be remembered forever.

Saint Boniface Catholic Church in Chandler celebrated its 11th anniversary in June. One life, one belief, and the right teachings can affect a family to the "nth" generations.

I loved my father dearly and got to know him well as he lived to be 94. I could write forever about my beloved father, Bonifacio Sanchez.

Chandler 4-H Club met on Nov. 3 at Faith Baptist Church with 20 youth and 20 adults in attendance.

More results were announced from those exhibiting livestock at the State Fair of Texas in Dallas.

Our president, Dillon Carver, and Vice President Presley Sanderson are finalizing their plans and fund raising for attendance at the National 4-H Congress on the end of November in Atlanta.

This is the first time Henderson County 4-H has been represented at this prestigious event.

Our club fund-raising

continues with raffle tickets available for a drawing in February for a Remington shotgun and a Cajun fish fryer.

Sanderson presented a splendid program on keeping record books for 4-H projects and competition opportunities available on county and district levels.

We will meet on Dec. 1 at the same location, at 7 p.m., and enjoy our annual Christmas party with snack items and finger foods.

CEA Rick Hirsch will present a program on animal health issues.

Newcomers are always welcome.

FRIENDS AND FLOWERS

On Nov. 4, ladies of the Friends and Flowers Garden Club celebrated this Thanksgiving season with a luncheon at the home of hostess Carol Blakely.

Billie Barker and Jean Dean were co-hostesses.

Smoked turkey, cornbread dressing, and all the trimmings was served on beautifully decorated tables in fall colors.

The highlight of the day was a "surprise" birthday

party for Dixie Taylor.

The door prize was won by Dixie McLean, which was a large resin pumpkin with the message "Autumn Greetings" carved on it.

A decision was made to give a cash donation to the Henderson County Food Bank in Athens, where garden club member Sara Taylor volunteers her time handing out food to needy families.



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