

**RECOVERING AND PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE EMMA S. BARRIENTOS
MEXICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT - 2012**

Interviewee: Gloria Mata Pennington

Interviewer: Celia R. Tovar

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Subject Headings: This interview is providing information about the political beginnings of both the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC), information regarding the Parks & Recreation Department as well as the interviewee's opinion of the impact on the community and much detail regarding the opening ceremony of the MACC.

Key Names: Gloria Mata Pennington, Mel Pennington, Roy G. Guerrero, Hortencia Palomares, Richard Moya, Gonzalez Barrientos, Gus Garcia, John Trevino, Ponciano Morales, Cathy Vasquez, Valerie Bernard, Cathy Vasquez, Roen Salinas, Margaret Gomez, Mayor Wynn, Lee Leffingwell, Mike Martinez, Jennifer Kim, Brewster McCracken, Sheryl Cole, Lloyd Doggett, Warren Struss, Donato Rodriguez, Martha P. Coter, Benito Huerta, Sylvia Orozco, Martha Cotera, Jesus Olivares.

TOVAR: This is an interview with Gloria Mata Pennington for the recovering and preserving of the history of the ESB-MACC standing for the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center Oral History Project. Hi, Ms. Pennington.

GLORIA PENNINGTON: Good afternoon, good to be with you.

TOVAR: Good to be with you, too. So let's start off simple and can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

PENNINGTON: Well I think it is very interesting. I think I arrived in Austin at a very, very interesting time. My husband and I came with our family to Austin in 1965. We came to open Austin's second television station, now channel thirty-six. My husband did sports there for many, many years and he was on the air for almost thirty years. He was very well known. His name was Mel Pennington. He was well known in this community and this community became a community that we loved. I started off by being a stay at home mom. We had two small

children at the time. I got involved in a lot of PTA work, a lot of work with schools, and those were the days that we were starting to talk about integrating the Austin schools, so I was even involved in some of that. When my children were in junior high school, I belonged to a group put together by the PTA of Mother's for a Peaceful Integration. I had a lot of history in the community, but I didn't know much about the Hispanic community until I got involved as a volunteer with politics. That started my knowledge of not only Eastside politics but Eastside issues, as well as senior issues, which would be my life's work here in Austin when I went to work for the Austin Parks & Recreation Department. I began first in 1976 working for the Parks & Recreation Department, and that may have been my first memory of discussion, true discussion about the need for a Mexican American Cultural Center. We had with the Austin Parks & Recreation a man that was very beloved in the community. His name was Roy G. Guerrero. The Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Park is now named after him, as well as the Guerrero Senior Activity Center. Mr. G was the Assistant Director of the Parks Department and he was my mentor. He put me to work and boy did he work me hard. He worked every bit as hard as those that he worked alongside with. He probably was the first person to mention to me, the community's desire for a Mexican American Cultural Center and how long, how many years the desire had been going on. So as it developed, the community was putting pressure on the City of Austin and the Parks Department for a Mexican American Cultural Center. I got to be involved from the inside out because I got to go along to a lot of community meetings. I remember meeting for the first time a young woman, Hortencia Palomares, who was passionate about a Mexican American Cultural Center. I remember meeting people from LUCHA that wanted a Mexican American Cultural Center. I remember talking to not only people in the community but to artists themselves saying there is a need to preserve our art and our cultural

roots in history and we need a Mexican American Cultural Center. So I heard it more and more throughout the community and then it became almost a necessity for me to learn more about the community and their work to try to accomplish this dream because I found out shortly that it was a dream that had been going on for a long, long time. In the Parks and Recreation Department, I worked for many department directors in the twenty three years that I worked for the department. They often would rely on Mr. Guerrero and myself, as lowly as I was on the totem pole, to go out into the community and get the feel of the community and bring back to the department what the community's wishes were. At one point when I was involved in the Eastside politics, I was fortunate enough to witness firsthand the creation of what now is called the Brown Machine. That was in the 70's when Hispanics first started getting elected. I worked in the campaign of Richard Moya, who in 1970 became the first Hispanic county commissioner. Indeed, the first Hispanic elected to an office here in Travis County; followed shortly in 1972, by Gus Garcia who was elected to the school board; followed by Gonzalez Barrientos, who in '74 was elected to be a state representative. Then the campaign that I was most involved in was the campaign with John Trevino for City Council in 1975. Working with these men, I was able to learn more and more about the Hispanic community here in Austin, some of those histories. Those were the days of the big economic furniture strike that really caught on and launched this community into a realization that we had to unite and had to work for a common effort and that it could be done. The creation of the Brown Machine and the election of these Hispanic men to office proved to the community, that "Sí, sí se puede." I think that the community started feeling more at ease at about this time. So about the time in '76 that I went to work for the Parks Department, I had a better grip on and knowledge of the community. I believed it was in the late 70's, probably more likely the early 80's. It was talk of actually building a Mexican American Cultural Center. That

first preliminary analysis was done to create a Mexican American Cultural Center at Fiesta Gardens. Fiesta Gardens, it wouldn't have been a bad idea. Fiesta Gardens is a beautiful location, but there were a lot of concerns that maybe the amount of territory there was not sufficient for the size of the center that they wanted. They contracted with a wonderful architect named Ponciano Morales to do the preliminary design. But you know what? It gave the people some hope and movement. There was movement in the direction of creating a center. And then guess what happened next -- years when it seemed like nothing was happening. Things kind of came to a standstill. So in the late 70's, there was a group called CMACA who came together for a Mexican American Cultural Center. It was headed by Cathy Vasquez and it was a group that had Valerie Menard, Cathy Vasquez, Roén Salinas and many others that worked very hard to try to accomplish bringing the community together and pushing really hard for a Mexican American Cultural Center. At one point I remember that the Parks & Recreation Department decided that this group could be the group that could manage a Mexican American Cultural Center. They were asked more and more to be involved in the planning of such a center. I remember going out and attending many of their meetings. I remember many, many evenings sitting around and talking with Cathy Vasquez about the dream. That was what everyone considered it, just a dream of having a Mexican American Cultural Center. The work continued. The push continued. Not only outside of the community but inside. People like Roy Guerrero. People like our elected officials because by this time we had elected officials who really cared about having a Mexican American Cultural Center. When the 80's rolled along, there was a resolution passed at City Council. That resolution was to have a feasibility study to see if the property on River Street, which is the location now of the Emma Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, could be feasible to have a center there. There was support for it on the City Council and

support in the community. It looked in the 80's that finally we were on our way to having that dream come true. Then in 1992, the proposition was put for a building a Mexican American Cultural Center was put on the bonds. There were lots of bonds were on there, worth millions of dollars. It was put to the vote of the citizens of Austin and the bond failed, so it meant no Mexican American Cultural Center. At least, not then. Now you would have thought that after all that time, all of that effort, all of that hard work, that that would have been such a blow to the community, that they would have given up, but they didn't. Instead, I think the community got stronger because of that defeat. They decided we will just have to start all over again and be more careful of how we set-up. What they did, they learned good lessons. They learned, "Hey, maybe this Cultural Center is not going to float as a standalone bond issue. Maybe we ought to couple it with something else that the community really wants and maybe our chances of passage will be better. Maybe we need support along the way." So, Cathy Vasquez was appointed to the Planning Commission, a big step because the first thing when you are planning bond election things was to go to the Planning Commission and say, "do you think this is a necessary thing?" Having the support there meant a whole lot because there was someone pushing from within, someone there to make sure that the Mexican American Cultural Center issue would have a better chance. By that time, Gus Garcia was also on the City Council, so he started working as only he can. I am a great fan of Mayor Garcia. I think he has accomplished so much for this community. His part in making sure that a cultural center became a reality has sometime been overlooked as being minor, but it was tremendous. He pushed for ordinances, for resolutions, and he coalesced with elected officials from the county. He and Commissioner Margaret Gomez pushed together to make sure that there was support throughout Travis County, not only in the City of Austin, for this center. Things started to fall in place and things started to look a lot

better. The second try for the bonds in 1998 -- it passed. So now we knew for sure that we were going to have a Cultural Center. Then the City became concerned. Their concern was that the citizen group that was supposed to be preparing to manage the center might not have the knowledge necessary to do it. There was a re-thinking of how the center would be managed. The management of the Mexican American Cultural Center was transitioned back to the Parks & Recreation Department. It was to be managed by them, but in order to give the citizenry some input, then the City Council created a council appointed advisory board comprised of citizens from the City of Austin. Now we were underway, we had a center, the bond had passed, the center was going to be built, and finally on September 15, 2007, the center opened. Now here is where I can tell you what happened on that wonderful, glorious day. I was asked by the Parks & Recreation Department if I could do some research on the history of the center. Very much like what we are doing now, talking to people and gathering from them the stories of their part and their knowledge of the creation of the work it took towards the creation of this center and giving the community what it wanted, then putting all of these pieces together. So I did some research and even went back, had a lot of help from my friends at the Austin History Center. We went through files and looked and looked. I even researched past Parks & Recreation Advisory Board minutes to see who the council appointed to work on the MACC and when, when they passed the resolutions pertaining to the MACC, and all of that went into the brief history that I put together. I overlooked the fact when I am telling you about the completion of the bonds about how fortunate we were and another good thing that happened with the delay was that the center here built on River Street had such a much better location for lots more land located next door to what is now Lady Bird Lake. What a wonderful location and the most beautiful part of it all was the architect selected to do this building. This building is so unique. There is nothing else in the

City of Austin that looks like it. It was built by a Mexican architect right here. I started researching this architect. His name is Teodoro González de León. This is a book about his work, buildings that he has designed all over the world. Unfortunately, this wonderful little book was published before the creation of the MACC, so the MACC is not included in this wonderful book, but it tells the story and the history of the architect. A man who was so talented and who did such beautiful work when he created the MACC for the City of Austin and the citizens of Austin. This is the program of the opening day at the Mexican American Cultural Center. It was decided to open the center on September 15th so that we could celebrate Diez y Seis. It was a wonderful decision, a very smart decision because on that day not only did we celebrate the opening of the MACC, we also celebrated Diez y Seis. I told you that I was asked to look and to do some research on the history. I put it all together for the program here. I called it Un Sueño Bonito, a beautiful dream, because over and over again that's what I felt, that the wish for the MACC for many years was just a dream. I started the history of the MACC by saying, we may not all agree on the date that the dream began, but one thing is certain, we all agree it is a beautiful dream that has come true. It talks about the early visionaries, the community leaders, the artists who approached the City of Austin to request support for the construction of the MACC. It talks about 1986, when the City Council responded by appointing a Task Force to obtain community input and to provide guidance into the development of a plan. It mentions 1988, when the City contracted a major consulting team to conduct a formal and comprehensive site and project feasibility, and that it resulted in the team's recommendation to support the establishment of a Mexican American Cultural Center at 600 River Street. It talks about 1992, when the proposed Mexican American Cultural Center was included in the city wide bond election but unfortunately narrowly defeated. It talks about '95, when the consultant

architectural team developed a phase one design for River Street. Then it talks about '97, when the Task Force membership incorporated under the name of the Center for Mexican American Cultural Arts, CMACA, and it talks about 1998, when the Hispanic community prompted the Austin Parks & Recreation Department to include the Mexican American Cultural Center in the '98 bond package. This time, the community leaders were well prepared and lead the way in promoting the passage of the bond, and as a result, it won voter approval. It talks about 2000, when a long-term lease was signed for CMACA to manage the existing and future facilities of the MACC. It talks about January 2002, when the City authorized the professional services for the architects. Then it talks about the transition of management of the MACC to the City Parks & Recreation Department, but to ensure ongoing community input, the Austin City Council created the Mexican American Cultural Center Advisory Board. The long awaiting ground breaking ceremony took place in November of 2005, and construction of the Mexican American Cultural Center begun in 2006, and the facility was completed in June 2007. Once again, for the beautiful facility, not only did I have the privilege of doing the research for that synopsis of the history of the MACC, but I was asked to be the Master of the Ceremonies for the opening of the MACC. It was a beautiful day, kind of warm even though it was in September. A huge tent was set up on the east side of the Center where hundreds of people were seated to hear the opening program for the Mexican American Cultural Center. The opening ceremony included an invocation to the four directions, where people in costume came and did a lovely dedication of this Center to the four directions of the wind, and they talked a lot about -- it was also a torch lighting ceremony. The Presentation of the Colors was done by an honor guard from the Austin Fire Department. The National Anthem was played so beautifully by Mariachi. We had a friar, Francisco Muñoz, from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and a priest from El Cristo Rey who

were also here. We had the greetings and acknowledgment on behalf of the Parks Department that I did. We had Mayor Will Wynn here and we had our Mayor Pro Tem Betty Dunkerley, Council member Lee Leffingwell, who is now our mayor, council member Mike Martinez, council member Jennifer Kim, council member Brewster McCracken and council member Sheryl Cole. They were here to be a part of all of this. A part of the program was former mayor, Gus Garcia. We had the honorable congressman, Lloyd Doggett. We had beautiful music as I said before by Mariachi and we had remarks by the director of the Parks & Recreation Department, Warren Struss, and then the most touching part to me was hearing about *una comunidad* that had come together and was now united. It was a talk given by Donato Rodriguez, who was the chair of the Mexican American Cultural Center Advisory Board, and Martha P. Cotera, who was the Vice Chair. Then we also heard from Benito Huerta. Benito Huerta was the artist that designed the beautiful snake walkway. Now, the snake walkway outside is part of the Austin Art in Public Places because the City of Austin has a policy that each time a city facility is built, a percentage - - 2% of the total amount or the total cost for building that facility -- is set aside for public art. It is a beautiful, beautiful thing that happens in this community and enriches our community by having it. The art for this center was the snake walkway by Benito Huerta. Benito told us that he had selected that design because it was the milk snake, a snake that was found on both sides of the border. I thought that was also very symbolic. After the program, we all proceeded to have the ribbon cutting ceremony and that was the beginning of a long, long celebration. That evening we had the Diez y Seis here. The Consul General of Mexico is Rosalba Ojeda. She was also the Consul General of Mexico at that time when the center opened. She gave the reenactment of El Grito from the balcony of this beautiful center. The Austin Fire Department honor guard walked from the very end of the snake walkway all the way to a drum cadence

through the property of the center, up the stairways and delivered the Mexican flag to the Consul General to start the ceremony of El Grito. It is...El Grito is a traditional ceremony that takes place throughout Mexico in every city and town. It is a scripted ceremony where the same thing is said at each of the ceremonies. It opens with the words "Mexicanos." It is a call to the Mexican people. I was delighted because that evening the Consul General of Mexico for the very first time was a woman and she gave El Grito by opening the ceremony with the words "Mexicanas, Mexicanos" a call to everyone, all Mexicanos to come together but I thought it was very symbolic that a woman, who was for the first time given El Grito in Austin, Texas, would open with the words "Mexicanas." I liked it a whole lot. We had three or four thousand people here. The zocalo there was packed with people and when you looked down into all of those people and saw them, you could see the pride on their faces as the Consul gave the words to El Grito, and when the music burst forth with the ringing of the bell and the playing of the Mexican National Anthem, you could not only see the pride in the faces of those Mexicanos, but also their emotion with all of the tears in their eyes, tears of joy. It was a most beautiful ceremony that I have attended in so many years, and it is something that I will carry in my mind and in my heart forever, the opening of the Mexican American Cultural Center -- now the Emma Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center -- here in Austin with the Consul General of Mexico giving El Grito that evening on September the 15th of 2007. It was truly a dream come true, Un Sueño Bonito. That's my story.

TOVAR: Thank you. I was wondering, how did it come to be called the Emma Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center?

PENNINGTON: There was a lot of talk about what would happen if this center was ever named because, as you can tell from my story, and you will learn even more as you hear the stories from

so many, many others, if we sit down and numerate the number of people who had something to do with the creation of the MACC, we would go into the hundreds. So, out of all of those people, how can we decide? It was felt very strongly that Emma Barrientos was a leader that came forth at the time when the movement needed a very strong leader. She had good connections in the community. She had good connections with the elected officials so she was able to step forward and lead. I think it was in recognition of that leadership that this center ended up being named for her.

TOVAR: You know, it's funny because you were saying that this idea of a Mexican American Cultural Center was really something people had wanted for a long time even before there was an official push to have one. Why do you think it took so long? Why do you think people didn't have a cultural center long before they decided to get together to make one?

PENNINGTON: I tell you what, for many years we had cultural activities here in Austin in the Mexican American community and for the Mexican American community, but I don't think that any of the people dared to dream so big. It was a big, big dream. We were talking about millions of dollars you know. I think people were kind of somewhat leery of having such a big dream and not being able to accomplish it, but as the time passed and as the Hispanic population grew and as people started to recognize the importance of culture and importance of roots and, most of all, the importance of preserving and nurturing them, they started to push for real. Once the push started, it still took many, many years, but they didn't give up. As I told you earlier, even with the disappointment with the first bond election failing for the Mexican American Cultural Center, the desire by that time was so strong in this community that that was not gonna stop people. We learned from our mistakes. We learned how to do it better, and we didn't give up. The reward was this beautiful center.

TOVAR: The center itself isn't quite finished is it?

PENNINGTON: No. It was determined, I believe, that the center was going to be built in three phases, and so I think phase 1 and phase 1B, I believe it was called, have been completed. There are still plans for possibly a parking lot, possibly a larger theater, more classroom spaces so there is still a long way to go. Fortunately, we have enough land surrounding us that it will be able to hold all of those things that we are looking forward to. Even as it is today, it is a center unlike anything else here in Austin, Texas. It is a center that this community should make real good use of and be very, very proud of.

TOVAR: This MACC, is it everything you thought it would be when you started off?

PENNINGTON: I tell you one thing. I never dreamt this design because the first few designs that I saw, going back to the initial design at Fiesta Gardens, were more traditional, more of what you normally see in public buildings. It didn't have the flare that this building has, that this architect has for designing unique buildings. As far as the building itself, it is more than I ever dreamt, and it is quite possibly more than anyone ever dreamt. However, the use of it is not what I want yet or what this community needs. We need to make better use of this building. It should be overflowing. Today when you and I walked in, what a joy it was to see young children downstairs here for classes, having their lunch break. I want to see a lot more of that and a lot of it every single day of the week because that is what the community worked for. They worked for a center that would belong to them and would program for them and their children. That is what I am looking forward to, even bigger and better things happening here at the MACC.

TOVAR: You know, there are so many people involved like you said. Who were some of the people that you think really were involved the longest?

PENNINGTON: It is difficult to tell. There were so many people who came and went, came and went. I mentioned a young woman named Hortencia Palomares because she has been kind of quiet about her contribution. I think her contributions were important because they were early ones. I think she may have made the project needs known to the community and maybe was instrumental in getting a lot more people interested in it. Sylvia Orozco. She has been involved for a long, long time. Anything to do with the Mexican American community's art projects, she was always involved and a leader. I mentioned Gus Garcia. He was an elected official who was in the right place at the right time for us to help make these things happen. His involvement may have not been as great in number of years but was greater for being there when we really needed him and for being in a position where could give us the help that we needed because he was an elected official. Then there were people like Cathy Vasquez, Roen Salinas and that group of CMACA that started off. Everyone kept poo-pooing their ideas off. They didn't think it was possible. A lot of people in the community didn't believe them when they were talking about a Mexican American Cultural Center. Although the center did not involve a turnout exactly how they had envisioned it, they had a big hand in leading the way in us getting to where we are today. There were a lot of people who made those sorts of contributions...a lot of people. I think of Martha Cotera, how many years she was involved. Martha and I tease about us not being shy and being women who make our feelings known, so sometimes women like us can make a difference, you know? I think she certainly has. If you look back over the many years, my God, I think of all of those early years – I mention Roy G. Guerrero. Mr. Guerrero worked for the Parks and Recreation Department for over thirty years. He rose through the ranks. He started as the Center Supervisor for the Pan American Recreation Center. He rose through the ranks and became a System Director. Way before there were any elected Hispanics, Mr. G

worked for the Parks Department in a pretty high position, so he was like an unofficial City Council member for the Eastside. To the people on the Eastside, he was the highest ranking official that they knew that worked for the City so if they had an issue, be it streets that needed repairs, be it a recreation center that wasn't being maintained properly, be it – whatever – a street light that didn't work, they thought Mr. G could fix it all. And quite often he did. There's been a lot of people in the community like that. I look back and I think I truly have been blessed, you know, to have been here in Austin the years I have been and to have the involvement that I had, the opportunity to meet so many wonderful, caring people and to work alongside them and then to see our dream accomplished. It has been a fantastic ride. It really has been.

TOVAR: You know, you were involved from the inside, but you also – what was it like to read about the MACC in papers here, on the news and the media, did people think of it the same way you did?

PENNINGTON: I'm not even sure that nowadays people think of the MACC as I did, as many of us did. I think those of us who were involved for so many years and were trying to make it happen, we look at this in a different way, but on the other hand that's also, I think, the reason that we expect this community to embrace this center a lot more than they have because we worked so hard to get it. So now let's use it.

TOVAR: You know, a lot of children, you mentioned, use this MACC. When we walked in, like you said before, there were children having a lunch break. They looked like they were having such a great time. Do you think that these children will grow up and be more involved in the community as a result?

PENNINGTON: If nothing else, I believe those children will grow up with a better knowledge of the Mexican culture, the Mexican traditions, the Mexican art, the Mexican story, the Mexican

crafts and anything and everything else that the MACC teaches them here. They are going to be better citizens for that because they will learn to appreciate that culture and they will learn that from what they learned here at the MACC.

TOVAR: You know you were talking about how there had been all of these Mexican cultural things going on in Austin – in the 80's you said? There don't seem to be as many now. Do you know why that would be?

PENNINGTON: Like what for instance?

TOVAR: Well, I haven't heard about as many celebrations out there. I haven't heard about gathering of people to celebrate, say, Diez y Seis?

PENNINGTON: Diez y Seis? I can say to you that Austin is pretty rich in its celebration of the Mexican culture. Fiesta Gardens still has the same program they had here for years and years and years to celebrate Cinco de Mayo and Diez Y Seis. Commissioner Margaret Gomez celebrates Cinco de Mayo annually at Woolridge Park at noon with a fiesta and food and mariachi. She is a wonderful singer ,so she sings along with the mariachi. We have the Diez y Seis celebration here at the MACC and we have the smaller celebration at Republic Square. Some years ago, I believe it was 2002, then Director of the Austin Parks & Recreation Department, Jesus Olivares, handed me a research paper, a report, about Republic Square. Republic Square was one of the four original parks that the City had. When it was first laid out, they laid out four parks called Public Squares. Brush Square, Woolridge Square is the other and Republic Square. The fourth square is no longer here. The state traded off the land. I don't think we, the citizenry, would have allowed that to happen nowadays, but back then it was done. We have three of the four original squares. Jesus Olivares gave me the research done on Republic Square and I read it. It said in 1870's, the Mexican American community held a Diez y

Seis at Republic Square. Guess what? I read that and I thought, “My gosh, all those many years ago until the late 1920’s or early 30’s, that’s where the celebration was held.” Up until the 1930’s the City of Austin directory listed Republic Square as Mexican Park, so when Jesus Olivares said, “What do you want to do about it?” I said, “I want to take our park back.” I wasn’t being all facetious. I meant it. We have a little symbolic celebration on the 15th at noon at Republic Square Park. That’s still going on. We have those and we have the ones at Fiesta Gardens. We have the ones at Woolridge Park. We have the celebrations here. Gonzalo Barrientos still has celebrations here. He used to do celebrations at noon at the rotunda of the Capitol. He is no longer. He is retired from being our state senator, but he is still involved in the celebration at Austin Community College each Diez y Seis. Those celebrations still exist. What does not exist, and what hurts me very much, is the participation of our citizenry. I would like to see hundreds of people show up at Republic Square just to honor the thought that in the 1870’s that’s where our people held their celebration. I can tell you that in 2002 when we went back to having a little celebration at Republic Square, I got goose bumps hearing mariachi music floating in the air at Republic Square. After all of those years, the air surrounding Republic Square resounded with mariachi music again. I thought it was fantastic.

TOVAR: I think so too. I can’t believe I didn’t know more about that. Let’s see – you’ve told me a lot.

PENNINGTON: You said that you wished – that you don’t know why you didn’t know more about it, but now that you do, what are we going to do about knowing more about it?

TOVAR: Well, I had better get involved.

PENNINGTON: That’s right. You know, that is our future, Celia. Having young people like you want to be involved, want to be the ones to carry on the traditions, want to be the ones to

nurture and protect our culture. If you don't do it, there will be no one to do it because we are all here for a specific amount of time. When our time is up, our time is up, and we need people to carry on those traditions. It's something that I have often discussed with my friend, Gus Garcia. Are we doing a good enough job teaching our younger people, infusing in them a desire, a passion to want to be the protectors of our culture, so much so that they will be willing to carry on after we are gone? So now you got a job laid out for you.

TOVAR: Well, thank you. I think I will just try to get more involved then. I got involved with this.

PENNINGTON: Yes you did, and I appreciate that very much.

TOVAR: Thank you for talking with me.

PENNINGTON: I thank you Celia. It has been a joy to get to know you.

TOVAR: It was good to get to know you too.

PENNINGTON: And we thank the Austin History Center for taking on this project.

(End of interview)