

Luna Farming Legacy:
A Porción of Edinburg

Discovering the Rio Grande Valley

Reports from the

Community Historical Archaeology Project with Schools Program

Report # 1

The Norquest Family: A Porción of Edinburg

Report # 2

The Cantu Family: A Porción of Edinburg

Report # 3

Atwood Acres: A Porción of Edinburg

Report # 4

The Eubanks Family: A Porción of Edinburg

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Luna Farming Legacy: A Porción of Edinburg

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Houts Farms: A Porción of Edinburg

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Luna Farming Legacy: A Porción of Edinburg

A report prepared for:

The Luna Family

and for UTRGV and the CHAPS Program class titled:

Discovering the Rio Grande Valley: The Natural and Cultural History of South Texas

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Dedication

This report is dedicated to the

Luna Family

Descendants of Maria Dolorez Perez Luna (born October 25, 1886) and Antonio Luna (born January 17, 1882) who arrived in the Rio Grande Valley a century ago from their homeland of Acámbaro, Guanajuato, Mexico and made Edinburg, Texas their home.

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Foreword

When asked how he felt about taking part in a research study on the Luna family history, octogenarian Ralph Luna poignantly responded, “I’m the only one that knows about the past.” We are all lucky Mr. Luna finally agreed to sit for an oral history, after repeated overtures from the CHAPS program. As the most senior Luna remaining, his perspective provides an essential complement to the stories offered by other Luna family members to produce the “Luna Farming Legacy: A Porción of Edinburg,” a work that employs an interdisciplinary approach to describe the story of a local family.

There are many winners in the process of publishing “Luna Family Legacy.” Students gained rich experiences as they engaged with Luna family members to listen to their stories, particularly as students were placed at the center of the inquiry process. Though multiple data sources inform this study, the spirit of the data emanate from the oral history installments. And these are not conventional oral histories; they are instead dialogical experiences where students have opportunities to actively shape the stories. Using the dialogical modality gives deeper meaning to the research process, and it allows students to have more meaningful learning experiences. This is a win for students.

The inter-disciplinary approach presents posterity with a more textured understanding of the life of a family, as the inquiry seeks to understand the family through multiple perspectives. There are questions on broad historical themes, such as the Great Depression, or the Bracero Program, or race relations. Responses from Luna family members offer thoughtful and nuanced responses to the range of questions. The use of Spanish by the Luna children while attending school, for example, yields responses that are consistent with the literature on language oppressive practices in schools against Spanish speaking children such as the Lunas. The Luna family resiliency is made clear, as Ralph and others speak to the challenges of having parents who were mono-lingual Spanish speakers, but the children were thrust into a schooling environment where their mother tongue was not to be used. Beyond language, the CHAPS process for inquiry also probes issues of biology, land ownership, farming, and the relationships a family had with institutions such as the United States military and the US Department of Agriculture.

But the most important win here is that the Luna family history is being documented in thoughtful and respectful ways. Ralph Luna told his stories with humor, but also with a great deal of pride and respect for the struggles and triumphs of the family. In many ways the Luna family narrative is the quintessential American story. It covers immigration, revolution, wars, economic depression, land ownership, race relations, and the realization that they could do well in this society. We are fortunate the Lunas agreed to tell their story, but we are especially lucky that Ralph Luna engaged in this process. At one point in his oral history his daughter Norma commented, “Dad still has all the information in his head.” Indeed, we are all the better for that heady reality.

Francisco Guajardo, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer
Museum of South Texas History

Preface

As another year passes by, we are reminded of how progress is engulfing the Rio Grande Valley. Here on the campus of the UTRGV, we have been witnesses to growth and change as several new buildings grace our expanding campus. CHAPS Program research investigates descendants of Spanish Colonial settlers who have been practicing subsistence farming along the Rio Grande for over 250 years. As that same river became the international boundary between the US and Mexico in 1848, landownership and the landscape began to change. Issues in Mexico such as the Mexican Revolution pushed families over the river into the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, where many folks established themselves as farmers alongside the new arrivals from the American Midwest in the early 1900s. The guarantee of successful year-round farming was a prominent theme and the Luna family was willing and able to embark on that challenge. As their life in the US began with some time in Los Ebanos, the family eventually found themselves purchasing land and farming in Edinburg.

The Luna Family provided us with a fantastic experience throughout the time we spent with them. We have been asking them to participate in our annual studies for several years and were so delighted when they finally agreed to work with us! From the moment we had our first meeting with the family, there was never a doubt in our minds that this study was going to be a tremendous success! Almost immediately, we felt like part of the Luna family. Ralph Luna, the eldest member of this branch has a sharp wit and a friendly demeanor; characteristics which are reflected among his siblings as well. We conducted field work on two of their family lots. Even though we had some rainy days, we were able to push through and find some very interesting material culture.

At the end of the semester, the students presented their group chapter studies to an audience that not only included many members of the Luna Family, but several of the previous farming families as well. My favorite part of these presentations is watching the farmers interact with one another. Dwayne Bair, Kelly Norquest and Roy Roegiers were on hand as well and it was fun to watch them reminisce with one another about days goneby. Mr. Bair recalled a time when people would refer to the section of northwest Edinburg where the Luna families lived and farmed “Lunaville.” When a family is so close that they live in houses one next to another so that they can successfully farm their collective properties, it is no wonder this section of town developed a notoriety.

On behalf of my colleagues Russell K. Skowronek (Anthropology and History), Juan L. Gonzalez (School of Earth, Environmental and Marine Sciences - Geology) we thank the College of Liberal Arts, College of Science, and the Border Studies Archive at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley for their continued support of this interdisciplinary project as well as our inaugural farming family representative for this entire project, Carrol and Odie Norquest. Without them, this project would not endure.

Roseann Bacha-Garza
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Lecturer I – Anthropology/History

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Introduction

Daniel Viveros

Edinburg, known as Chapin settlement from 1908 until 1911, is a growing city in the Rio Grande Valley that is filled with history. Founded in 1908, Chapin was named after County Judge Dennis B. Chapin. In 1911 it was renamed to Edinburg. This small town built a County Jail in 1909 (Figure I.1). That historic structure has since been preserved, renovated and attached to The Museum of South Texas History. Today Edinburg is mainly a Hispanic or Latin-based city with some Anglo, African American and a few European and Asian communities sprinkled in. This of course is largely due because of its close proximity to the Mexican border. As the city grows with the likes of neighboring cities such as McAllen, Mission and Brownsville, there are still historical reminders of the past beyond the local museum. Like most old towns, even the streets have history behind them. Many of the streets are named after railroad officials. They included Van Vleck, which is Van Week, Lovett, Peter, Loeb, Kuhn, McIntyre, Harriman which later became University Dr., Mahl, Stubbs and Fay streets. Other streets like Samano, Champion, Sprague, Closner and Chapin were all named after local leaders. Many of my school time friends lived on Stubbs and Mahl streets with most of their families living there still.



(Figure 1) Original Hidalgo County Jail, Edinburg, TX www.texasescapes.com 2006

Farming and ranching were a big part of not only Edinburg but of the Rio Grande Valley in general. Over the years, The Community Historical Archaeology Projects with Schools or the CHAPS Program have interviewed and researched different farming families that have been around since almost the beginning of Edinburg and have remained not only in the city but still farm like the generations before them. Families like the Roegiers, the Eubanks, Bair, Atwood/Evans, Cantu and Norquest families were researched and interviewed for the project in the past. Historical accounts of the family were given from the time when the first generations arrived here all the way down to present day relatives. Accounts of farming life back then and the changes the families and the farming industry has gone through throughout the decades were also collected. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the Rio Grande Valley was promoted as the “Magic Valley” with land that was very fertile which led to many people migrating here. The tropical type of weather that is here was also helpful in planting certain crops all year round that was not possible in other parts of the United States where winter weather prevented crop harvesting. All this was made possible because of irrigation that had been made possible in 1915, and thus an economic boom initiated in agriculture. Farmers in Edinburg were able to harvest and sell such crops like grain, cotton and even citrus produce. Vegetables, corn, sugarcane and eggs were another source of income for the farmers. In the 1920’s Edinburg began to expand itself as not just a small town but evolving into a city. Buildings began to rise up in this new city. A country club, hospital and schools were built. According to *edinburg.com* in the history portion of the site, Edinburg wanted to establish itself as a leader in education, so Edinburg Junior College was built as well as some public schools (Figure 1.2). Sam Houston and Stephen F. Austin schools, which are still in operation today, were among the first schools built. In 1927, The Edinburg Southern Pacific Railroad Station opened up and gave Edinburg access to the greater world (Figure 1.3).



Figure 2 Edinburg Junior College.



Figure 3 Southern Pacific Depot of Edinburg

The Luna Family made its way to Edinburg in the 1925. The patriarch of the family, Antonio Luna Sr. had already lived in the United States before in the city of Los Ebanos, Texas but returned to Mexico in the 1920's. This class titled "Discovering the Rio Grande Valley," was conducted by the CHAPS team and a complete analysis of the Luna family was done. During the course of the semester, we all researched the family and their properties. We took tours of the land; saw the equipment they use and even saw the first tractors they had bought. We were able to see and ask about the types of crops they planted when they first started farming in comparison to what they do now. We took soil samples, struck water and were able to find untouched soil. Over the course of this report we will take you on a historical journey with us as led by the Luna family. We will cover the beginnings of the family's start in Edinburg, the evolution of the family business of farming, how they became part of the already established farming community. We'll show you how the Luna's created business partners and longtime friendships that helped them become successful farmers. Through different interviews you'll find out about their beliefs, their family values and how they wanted their family to be more than just farmers. They wanted them to work smarter, not harder and become educated and make better lives for themselves. We will reveal to the reader old family stories, some funny, some with life lessons and maybe even some sad stories. So, journey back in time with us, to a time where Edinburg didn't have as many buildings or businesses, or banks or Walmart's, HEB's and different pharmacies. A time where fields were almost everywhere you turned, the smell of vegetables, corn, and citrus filled the air. Our research will bring you to the present day where the family still farms on the same land they had bought when they first arrived and where stories of the Luna children and grandchildren have finished high school and college. This is the story of the Luna family of Edinburg.

Chapter One: Luna Family Geneology

Leann Castillo and Caitlyn Rodriguez

Antonio Luna was born on January 17, 1882, in Acámbaro, Guanajuato, Mexico, and Dolores Pérez Luna was born on October 25, 1886, in Chamàcuaro, (a village in Acámbaro) Mexico. Dolores' mother died when she was an infant, therefore her father gave her to one of his seven brothers, who did not have any children of his own so that he could raise her. It is unclear which brother raised her, but with the help of Ancestry.com, we were able to find Dolores' parents as well as Antonio's parents. Dolores' mother's name was Pomposa Chavez, she was born in 1836 and died on August 5th, 1893 in Acámbaro, Guanajuato, México. Dolores' father's name was Martin Perez, his date of birth and date of death are unknown. Antonio's father's name was Ramon Luna, he was born in 1846 and died on March 3, 1900 in Acámbaro, Guanajuato, México.

Dolores grew up to become a teacher and Antonio became a butcher. He would slaughter calves and sell them by the pound. Later, he created a business out of this specialty. He did not have an education and though Dolores did try, she could never fully educate him. Antonio and Dolores were married on May 28, 1904 (appendix A). They had nine children. Unfortunately, three of the children, Rafael (who Rafael (Ralph) Luna, son of Refugio and Maria Luna, is named after), Juan, and Maria Rosa, died during the 1918 flu epidemic (Figure 1.1). This epidemic occurred from 1918-1919 and affected 500,000 Americans. Texas had an estimated death toll of 20,000.¹ As a result, fearing for the rest of their children, Antonio and Dolores moved to Los Ebanos, Texas in the United States, where they would live until 1933 when Antonio thought it was best to move back to Mexico.

Though the family was comfortable in the United States, Antonio believed that it was time for them to return to Mexico since the threat of the influenza outbreak was over. They would only live in Mexico for eight months as it was difficult to adjust to the farming lifestyle there. Their son, Refugio would be the first to return to the states and when Antonio and Dolores saw him doing well in the agriculture business, they decided to return to the US in 1935. Some of the family would settle in Hidalgo, Texas and in Edinburg, Texas. Antonio and Dolores would live out their lives in the United States, they would still travel to Mexico (figure 1.2/1.3) and have many grandchildren; farming until their deaths. Dolores died in 1948, at the age of 62 and Antonio died in 1972, at the age of 90. Though Antonio and Dolores did go through challenges together, they were able to give their children a great life, who in return passed down an amazing story.

¹ CHESTER R., "EPIDEMIC DISEASES," The Handbook of Texas Online| Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), June 12, 2010, 1, accessed December 09, 2018, <https://tshonlineorg/handbook/online/articles/sm01>.



Figure 1.1: Antonio and Dolores Luna Family Portrait. Top left three children, Maria Jesusa, Juan, and Rafael are the ones who died during the 1918/1919 Influenza outbreak in Mexico and United States. Image provided by the Luna family.

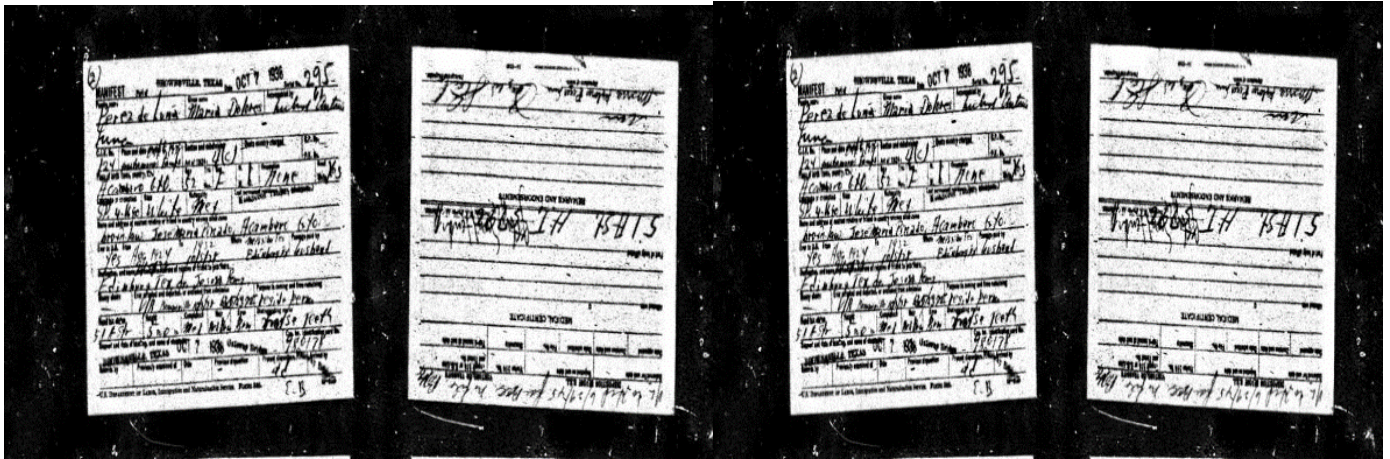


Figure 1.2: Maria Dolores's 1938 Border Crossing Document. Acquired from Ancestry.com records. Acquired from Ancestry.com

SERVICIO DE MIGRACION
FORMA 5

NUM. 67462

TARJETA DE IDENTIFICACION EXPEDIDA POR OFICINA DE EMIGRACION DE ACAMBARO, GUANAJUATO, MEXICO.

El 7 de Oct. de 1938 DE 1938

Ante LUNA JIMENEZ, Antonio.

CUYO RETRATO Y FIRMA CONSTAN EN SEGUIDA

[Retrato de hombre]

[Firma]

MEDIA FILIACION DEL INTERESADO

CONSTITUCION FISICA: Mediana

ESTATURA: 1.50 CM. COLOR: Moreno

PELO: Negro. CEJAS: Oscuras

OJOS: Castaños. NARIZ: Chusca

BENTON: Recta. BOCA: Regular

BARBA: Ninguna visible. SEÑAS PARTICULARES: Ninguna visible

DATOS COMPLEMENTARIOS

EDAD: 36 años. AÑO EN QUE NACIO: 1902

ESTADO CIVIL: Casado. PROFESION, OFICIO U OCUPACION: Agricultor Prop.

IDIOMA NATIVO: Español. OTROS IDIOMAS QUE HABLE: Acambareño, Gto.

LUGAR Y PAIS EN QUE NACIO: Acambato, Gto.

NACIONALIDAD ACTUAL: Mexicana. RAZA: Mexicana

RELIGION: Catolica. RAZA: Mexicana

LUGAR DE RESIDENCIA: Acambato, Gto.

NOMBRE Y DOMICILIO DE PERSONAS QUE PUEDAN DAR REFERENCIAS DEL INTERESADO: NARCISA LUNA - Acambato, Gto.

OTROS DATOS: Compró su NACIONALIDAD.

SERVICIO DE MIGRACION
FORMA 5

NUM. 67463

TARJETA DE IDENTIFICACION EXPEDIDA POR OFICINA DE EMIGRACION DE ACAMBARO, GUANAJUATO, MEXICO.

El 7 de Oct. de 1938 DE 1938

Ante LUNA, Dolores Perez de.

CUYO RETRATO Y FIRMA CONSTAN EN SEGUIDA

[Retrato de mujer]

[Firma]

MEDIA FILIACION DEL INTERESADO

CONSTITUCION FISICA: Mediana

ESTATURA: 1.50 CM. COLOR: Moreno

PELO: Castaño. CEJAS: Oscuras

OJOS: Castaños. NARIZ: Chusca

BENTON: Recta. BOCA: Regular

BARBA: Ninguna visible. SEÑAS PARTICULARES: Ninguna visible

DATOS COMPLEMENTARIOS

EDAD: 36 años. AÑO EN QUE NACIO: 1902

ESTADO CIVIL: Casada. PROFESION, OFICIO U OCUPACION: Hogera

IDIOMA NATIVO: Español. OTROS IDIOMAS QUE HABLE: Acambareño, Gto.

LUGAR Y PAIS EN QUE NACIO: Acambato, Gto.

NACIONALIDAD ACTUAL: Mexicana. RAZA: Mexicana

RELIGION: Catolica. RAZA: Mexicana

LUGAR DE RESIDENCIA: Acambato, Gto.

NOMBRE Y DOMICILIO DE PERSONAS QUE PUEDAN DAR REFERENCIAS DEL INTERESADO: NARCISA LUNA - Acambato, Gto.

OTROS DATOS: Compró su NACIONALIDAD.

Figure 1.3: Antonio and Dolores' 1938 migration documents

Refugio Luna Sr. father of ten children, was born on March 13, 1911, in Chamacuaro, Guanajuato, Mexico. He moved to Los Ebanos, Texas with his family when he was 6 years old. Maria Garza, wife of Refugio Luna Sr. was born on April the 9, 1912. She was 4 months old when she came to the US. Her family resided in Hidalgo, Texas and then moved to Los Ebanos, Texas, where she would soon meet her husband, Refugio.

The story of how Refugio and Maria first met, is a story that every Luna family member knows, with thanks to Cecilia, the youngest sibling, who heard the story first. Maria would go to wash clothes in the Rio Grande, and it is unknown how many times she went to the river, but every time she would go, she would use the same rock to wash her basket of clothes. Under that rock she would find a love note. Refugio would ride his horse down the river and put love notes under the rock (Figure 1.4). This would become the couple's secret place where they would both leave love notes for one another. The love notes were the only way to communicate with one another, as they were not allowed to talk to each other in public. It was a sign of disrespect for a young lady to talk to a young man unchaperoned. They could only see each other at weddings where they could dance with one another as it was in public. Maria would get dropped off by her father and Refugio would follow behind on his horse.



Figure 1.4: Refugio Luna Sr. on his horse. Image provided by the Luna family.

Though these occasions were far apart from each other, the two never lost interest in one another. The couple got married on August 1, 1930, in Rio Grande City (Figure 1.5). Maria was 18 years old and rode in on a horse-drawn buggy. Refugio was 19 years old.



Figure 1.5: Refugio and Maria Luna on their wedding day. Image provided by the Luna Family.

The two would have their first child, Rafael, one year later in Los Ebanos, Texas. Then continued to have five more boys, Romulo Sr., Refugio Jr., Ramon, Roberto, and Rodolfo Domingo. They had their first girl, Teresita de Jesus in 1945, and continued to have three more girls, Maria Juanita, Maria Dolores, and Maria Cecilia (Figure 1.7).



Figure 1.6: Maria Garza Luna holding baby Cecilia. Image provided by the. Luna family

Refugio and Maria left the U.S in 1933, after the birth of their first two boys, and moved to Mexico, due to the insistence of Refugio's father, Antonio Luna Sr., who believed that the family could make a better life for themselves in Mexico. So, they packed up everything into their pickup trucks and sold everything they could not take with them. Refugio and Maria would only live in Mexico for eight months, because Refugio could not get along with the other farmers. In this time, it was customary for farmers to work in "Ejidos", a Mexican farming union that gave you a piece of land and told you what to grow. As the leader of the family, Refugio saw that the family could not make a proper living in Mexico and decided to come back eight months later in 1934. Once his mother, father, and brothers saw Refugio successfully obtain a job and how quickly his farm prospered in Edinburg, this motivated them to follow him back to the United States. Refugio and Maria would live out the remainder of their lives in Edinburg (Figure 1.7).



Figure 1.7: Family photo of Refugio and Maria Luna. Top left to right: Romulo, Maria, Dolores, Refugio, and Juanita. Bottom row: Roberto and Teresa. Image provided by the Luna family.

Unfortunately, Refugio died on May 6th, 1965 in a car accident and his wife, Maria, sadly, died on January 12, 1993, from a heart attack. Even though Refugio and Maria are now gone, their farming legacy lives on with their children, who loved them very much and are grateful for the life they provided them (Figure 1.8)



Figure 1.8: Refugio and Maria Luna. Images provided by the Luna family.

Refugio Luna Sr. and Maria Garza Luna had ten children. There were six boys: Rafael, Romulo, Refugio Jr, Ramon, Roberto, and Rodolfo Domingo. The last four children were all girls named Teresita De Jesus, Maria, Maria Dolores, and Maria Cecilia. Ralph Luna was the only child born in Los Ebanos and the youngest daughter Maria Cecilia, was born in McAllen. The other children were all born in Edinburg. Most of the children were delivered by midwives at home on the farm of their parents. However, Maria Dolores was born at the Grand View Hospital in Edinburg and Maria Cecilia was born in a clinic in McAllen. The same midwife was used for all the births that were at the home in Edinburg. The midwife's name was Nativida. As the oldest of the children, Ralph would go the midwife's home as he came home from school, to pick up his siblings' birth certificates. The birth certificates were ready a month after the birth of the children because they had to be registered in the courthouse of Edinburg, although she was paid directly after the delivery. The service cost of the midwife for each delivery was ten dollars.

There were a few children who had nicknames. Rafael, the eldest of the children, is nicknamed Ralph, Fel, or Rafa, depending on which family member was calling him. Rafael was named after one of his father's siblings who passed as a child from influenza. Romulo, the second sibling of the family was named after a close friend of the family, his nickname was Lito. Refugio Jr, the third son of the family, was called Cuco. The fourth child, Ramon, was called a shortened form of his name, Mon. Roberto, the fifth son of the family was called Beto, a shortened form of his name as well. The last son, Rodolfo, was the only child that received a middle name. Rodolfo's middle name was Domingo, growing up his nickname was Fito. Teresita De Jesus has her nickname of Tere and was the only daughter who does not have Maria as her first name. Tere's mother was hoping for a girl and promised if it was a girl, she would name her after the saint Teresita de Jesus. Maria Juanita had several nicknames growing up, Janie, Juanita, or Juana. The last child who had a nickname growing up was Maria Dolores, she is the ninth child of the family and she was called Loli or Lola. Maria Dolores was named after her paternal grandmother, Dolores Perez Luna. Maria Celia's nickname was Mare and Mari.

Refugio Luna Sr and Maria Garza Luna raised their children with Catholicism. Each child had gone through their Seven Sacraments. Ralph was baptized in Los Ebanos and the rest of the children were all baptized at Sacred Heart Church in Edinburg. (Figure 1.10) Each of the children were baptized when they were two months old. The siblings attend church weekly and as often as they can. Maria Garza Luna made it a point that religion was to be a great part of their lives growing up and even in adulthood. The children recount that they always attended CCD and completed their sacraments. Their mother also wanted them to get married in the right way and through the church. (Figure 1.11)



Figure 1.9: Sacred Heart Church, Edinburg, Texas. Image provided by the Luna Family.



Figure 1.10: Cecilia on her 1st Holy Communion in front of Bracero shed. Image provided by the Luna family.

The children were raised in Edinburg on what is now Roberto Luna's property located at the corner of 23rd and Schunior Streets. They all attended school in Edinburg and most graduated from Edinburg High School. Their mascot was the Bobcats and the school colors were red and blue. Ralph completed and graduated from Edinburg High School and he did one year in college until he was called to fight in the Korean War. Roberto completed tenth grade and Rodolfo completed eleventh grade of high school. Ramon, Teresa, and Juanita graduated from Edinburg High School. Dolores graduated from Edinburg High School and graduated from UT-Pan American University and received her master's in counseling as well. The youngest of the family, Cecilia graduated from Edinburg High School and completed vocational school, bookkeeping and accounting at South Texas Vo-Tech in McAllen.

Rafael (Ralph) Luna married Eloisa Medrano on November 27, 1954. They had waited to get married until Rafael had returned from the Korean War. Ralph believed it would be best until the war had ended, and he had come home safely to get married. They have three children; Norma Linda Luna, Eduardo Luna, and Esther Luna. Norma Linda Luna married Richard Glenn Rydl. Eduardo Luna married Rosemarie Cuevas and have two children; DanaRae Luna and Eduardo Dusty Luna, who is now a doctor and a mentor at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. Esther Luna married Gustavo Montemayor and had three children; Mitzi Renee Montemayor Hernandez, Joshua Rush Montemayor, and Reena Marie Montemayor. Ralph Luna and Eloisa Medrano Luna have five great-grandchildren; Zoe Renee Hernandez, Jameson Rush Montemayor, Demarie Ella Montemayor, OliviaRose (Livi) Luna and Emma Luna. (Appendix B -family tree)

Romulo (Lito) Luna Sr. married Olivia Trevino. They have three children; Roy Luna Sr., Judy Luna, and Romulo Luna Jr. Roy Luna Sr. is survived by his five children; Norma Linda Luna, Roy Luna Jr, LeRoy Luna, Lorinda Luna, and Florinda Luna. Judy Luna married David Garza and have one child, Arlene Garza. The last child, Romulo Luna Jr married Cindy Alaniz. They have two children; Ryan Romulo Luna and ReAnn Caylee Luna. Romulo Luna Sr. is survived by his wife Olivia, children, and grandchildren. (Appendix C- family tree)

Refugio (Cuco) Luna Jr married Idolina Ramirez. They have five children; Adolfo Luna, Aida Luna, Alma Luna, Lindolfo (Lindy) Luna, and Thelma Luna. Adolfo Luna has three children; Keith Lee Luna, Adolfo Max Luna, and Lorriss Kay Luna. Aida Luna has two children; Sarah Ann Villeda and Antonio Gabriel Villeda. Alma Luna married Peter Vance de la Garza. Together they have Nicholas Andrew de la Garza and Dominic Peter de la Garza. Lindolfo Luna has two children; Lindsey Renee Luna and Christian Luna. The last child of Refugio Luna Jr, Thelma Luna married Raul de Leon. (Appendix D -family tree)

Ramon (Mon) Luna married Dora Gonzalez. They have four children; Stella Yvonne Luna, Roy Luna Sr., Dora Jeanne Luna, and Jo Ann Luna. Their daughter Stella married Carlos Omar Contreras and they have three children; Vanessa Renee Contreras Cavazos, Eric Omar Contreras, and Marcus Anthony Contreras. Roy Luna Sr. married Martha Alicia Balderas and they had three children; Roy Luna Jr., Julia Rae Luna, and Jessica Nicole Luna. Their second daughter Dora Jeanne married Chris Hinojosa and they had Steven Richard Hinojosa. The last child of Ramon Luna and Dora Gonzalez Luna is Jo Ann Luna and she married Belisario Lumbreras. They had three children; Marco Daniel Lumbreras, Aaron Jacob Lumbreras, and Isaac Omar Lumbreras. (Appendix E - family tree)

Roberto Luna Sr. married Nora Sylvia Gonzalez. They had three children; Roberto (Bobby) Luna Jr., Rolando Luna Sr., and Sylvia Nora Luna. Roberto (Bobby) Luna Jr. married Iris Zamora. They have two children; Ryan Andrew Luna and Alyssa Renee Luna. Rolando Luna Sr. married Lydia Marie Bernal. They have two children; Rolando Luna Jr. and Leandra Rae Luna. The last child, Sylvia Nora Luna married Daniel Garcia. Together they have three children; Daniela Nicole Garcia, Gabriella Norah Garcia, and Katelyn Mia Garcia. (Appendix F- family tree)

Rodolfo Domingo Luna married Celsa Benavidez. They have two children; Rosalinda Luna and Cynthia Luna. Rosalinda Luna Scott has three children; Joshua Valadez, Samantha Scott and Matthew Ryan Scott. Cynthia Luna Espinoza has one child; Francisco Daniel Espinoza. Rodolfo Domingo Luna and Celsa Benavidez have two great-grandchildren; Ivanz Bless Martinez and Rodolfo Josue Valadez. (Appendix G- family tree)

Teresa Luna and Fidel Medrano Sr married on March 18, 1966. They have six children; three boys and three girls. From oldest to youngest, there is Sylvia Medrano, Thomas Medrano, Refugio Medrano, Christina Medrano, Lydia Medrano, and Fidel Medrano Jr. Sylvia Medrano married Raul Martinez Sr. They have two children; Raul Martinez Jr. and Jessica Emilia Martinez. Thomas Medrano has two children; Thomas Antonio Medrano and Jacquelin Vyannhe Medrano. Refugio Medrano has one child, Gavin Javier Medrano. Christina Medrano Sifuentes has three children; Aaron Shea Sifuentes, Adam Hunter Sifuentes, and Ashley Dove Sifuentes. Lydia Medrano married Ricardo Villa Sr. Together they have three children; Joseph Andrew Torres, Ricardo Villa Jr., and Valeria Nyomi Villa. Lastly, Fidel Medrano Jr. married Cynthia Gutierrez. They have two children together; Alise Nicole Medrano and Sophia Rose Medrano. (Appendix H- family tree)

Maria Juanita Luna and Mario Navarro married on February 3, 1967. They have three children; Rene Ricardo Navarro, Jaime Navarro, and Omar Navarro. Rene Ricardo Navarro has three daughters; Brittany Ann Navarro, Brianna Eilene Navarro, and Renee Elizabeth Navarro. Omar Navarro married Alondra Ibarra, together they had Jacob Navarro and Megan Navarro. (Appendix I - family tree)

Maria Dolores Luna and Eduardo Vasquez Vega Sr. married on May 18, 1973. They have four children together; Eduardo Vega Jr., Carlos Armando Vega, Gabriel Alonzo Vega, and Criselda Veronica Vega Tijerina. Eduardo Vega Jr. married Ida Renee Palacios, they have three children; Hannah Gabrielle Vega, Hailey Renee Vega, and Eddie Jude Vega. Carlos Armando Vega has a son, Sean Carlos Vega. Their son Gabriel Alonzo Vega married Sandra Vela, they have Sophia Alexandra Vega and Ryan Nicole Vega. Criselda Veronica Vega married Homer Elud Tijerina, they have three children; Gabrielle Nicole Tijerina, James Edward Tijerina, and Madison Grace Tijerina. (Appendix J - family tree)

Maria Cecilia Luna married Ricardo Rios Sr. They have three children; Melissa Ann Rios, Michelle Marie Rios, and Dr. Ricardo Rios Jr. The first child, Melissa Ann Rios attorney at law married Arturo Montes. They have three children together; Felicia Mia Montes, Natalia Elizabeth Montes, and Santiago Arturo Montes. The second child, Michelle Marie Rios has three children; Alyssa Danielle Salinas, Bethany Jocelyn Salinas, and Dylan Ryan Salinas. The last child, Ricardo Rios Jr. D.C married Kristan Diaz M.D. Together they have two children; Liam Ricardo Rios and Bryce Christian Rios. (Appendix K - family tree)

The Lunas are a very close and tight-knitted family. Although, now having their own families, grandchildren and great grandchildren to enjoy, they keep in touch and are all live nearby and visit each other often. The Luna siblings take care of each other and live by their parents' words as they carry on traditions and values to their children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren. The bonds have not broken since they have grown and developed their own lives and characters. The Luna family continues to pass down the family name and carry on their roots, not only in agriculture but in different professions as well.

Chapter Two: The Journey

Julio Smith, Manuel Vera, Karina Ramirez and Ashley DeLeon

There were plenty of factors in the early twentieth century that influenced many families to leave their homeland in Mexico and venture in the United States. This chapter will be focused primarily on the social and economic factors that attributed to the Luna family's immigration to the United States in 1926. We will review the developments that took place in the South Texas Borderlands and then compare them with the Luna's family experiences (Figure 2.1).



Figure 2.1- Family Gathering: Front row: Janie, Cecilia, Maria G. Luna, Teresa, Dolores
Back row: Roberto, Refugio Jr, Rodolfo, Ramon, and Rafael (Ralph). Image provided by the Luna family.

Contours of Mexican Immigration

The first three decades of the twentieth century would witness the initial surge of massive immigration with over 700,000 people crossing legally from Mexico to the United States.² There would be many push-pull factors that contributed to the immigration taking place from Mexico into the desolate South Texas borderland region. Porfirio Diaz's oppressive dictatorship and disregard for the landless peasantry would cause a revolution to break out in 1910, when violence and destruction would put heavy burden on all people in

² Oscar J. Martinez. 2001. *Mexican-Origin People in the United States: A Typical History*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Mexico.³ Historian Julia Young explains that the Mexican Revolution would lead to an increase in the flow of immigrants, many of them war refugees, political exiles and even regular citizens who fled to escape violence. Young states the number of legal migrants “grew from around 20,000 migrants per year during the 1910s to about 50,000 – 100,000 migrants per year during the 1920s.”⁴ The 1920s would bring the end of a thirty-year dictatorship and establish a constitutional republic, however rebel groups would continue to periodically express themselves through violence and economic reconstruction would not begin until the 1930s. There would be sporadic violent outbursts, many of which would be commonly attributed to the prominent Mexican revolutionary general Francisco “Pancho” Villa. Incredibly the father of Maria Garza Luna, Inocente Garza would be a part of Villa’s division during the Mexican Revolution. (Figure 2.2)



Figure 2.2 Maria G. Luna and her father, Inocente Garza

A means to a better economic setting surely attracted both the lower and middle classes during this time period. America was a refuge ripe with opportunities for success and many families like the Lunas would come over and build a strong foundation that would later yield many economic achievements. Contrary to many beliefs that there were mainly push factors leading to Mexican immigration, it is important to also consider the US Government and private-sector employers that participated directly in luring Latinos to the United States. The activity that was generated by the United States’ economy in the early twentieth century triggered significant migratory shifts, filled with individuals heading to America. This pursuit of a better life would be another factor that would pull the Luna’s

³ Martinez, 2001. Pgs., 27-28.

⁴ Steinhauer, and Jason. "The History of Mexican Immigration to the U.S. in the Early 20th Century." The History of Mexican Immigration to the U.S. in the Early 20th Century | Insights: Scholarly Work at the John W. Kluge Center. March 11, 2015. Accessed November 21, 2018. <https://blogs.loc.gov/kluge/2015/03/the-history-of-mexican-immigration-to-the-u-s-in-the-early-20th-century/>.

over to the United States, and that same pursuit would later motivate Antonio's then 6-year-old son Refugio, to build an agricultural empire that would provide land for multiple generations of his family to endure. It is this drive and an understanding of hard work that made Antonio and later Refugio such a great fit in South Texas. There would be a strong push for cotton and foodstuff in the Southwestern United States from 1900-1940; this coupled with new immigration systems would transform "deserts into croplands".⁵

Refugio Luna was only a young boy in 1926 when his father decided to immigrate to the United States. Refugio's oldest son Ralph Luna explained in his oral interview the factors that played into his grandfather, Antonio Luna Sr., wanting to come to the United States. Ralph Luna attributes the commonly known Spanish Influenza of 1918-1919 as another primary factor in relocating to the United States. During the deadliest pandemic in history, an estimated five hundred million people (or a third of the world-population at the time) worldwide lost their lives.⁶ There are no accurate figures attributed to the number of deaths in Mexico, but the pandemic had no boundaries and surely inflicted itself heavily on the country. Ralph explains through personal interview that the epidemic took a heavy burden on the family. His grandfather lost three children to the devastating epidemic, another child went blind and he himself contracted the flu but was able to survive (Figure 1.1).

A New Beginning?

The Reed-Johnson Immigration Act of 1924 limited the number of immigrants allowed entry into the United States through a national origin's quota. The quota provided immigration visas to only two percent of the total number of people of each nationality in the United States as of the 1890 national census.⁷ With the Immigration Act of 1924 being passed, Antonio and his family were one of a few families that could enter the United States the following year on an immigration Visa (Figure 1.3).

Upon immigrating, they would initially begin their journey in the United States living with some relatives before relocating in a small town called Los Ebanos close to Sullivan City, Texas. Antonio Luna Sr. and his seven siblings would move to the United States as so many had before him with blind optimism. Antonio, like so many other immigrants quickly found work clearing land in the Valley, a method in which the trees and brush of untouched land is burned down to allow for the soil to be reused for agriculture or grazing. Antonio also invested in goats and cattle selling the baby goats for the extra income. It was here in a small town near Sullivan City that the Lunas would spend their first five quiet years.

⁵ Martinez, 2001. Pg. 7

⁶ National Archives and Records Administration. Accessed November 22, 2018. <https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/influenza-epidemic/>.

⁷ Martinez, 2001. Pg. 64.

The early 1930s would prove to very difficult for many Hispanic families. The Great Depression was taking its toll on the American economy and the government looked to intervene with this form of repatriation. Repatriation would account for the deportation of a large number of Hispanics; 60% of the deported being birthright citizens. In the 1930s between half a million and one million Mexicans departed the United State for Mexico.⁸ Many other families voluntarily moved back to their homeland because of the economic issues that the country was facing. The Luna's were able to quickly make some good money and obtain many essentials they didn't have when they came into the country. Returning to Mexico would be a much different experience than Antonio and his family could have anticipated. The Lunas would be met with negative sentiment. They, along with many Mexican-origin Latinos would not be welcomed with open arms as they hoped. The family tried to invest with their savings to no prevail due to the local government intervening on citizens' affairs. With all of this in effect, it took Antonio just a little over 8 months to decide to go back to the United States in hope that they can get back to what they had started.

Upon relocating back into the United States, Refugio's goal was to grow economically at a much swifter pace then his father. Refugio quickly found work in Hidalgo bathing cattle and making sure they were groomed properly. Refugio then relocated to Edinburg to be closer to his family, where he found work on farms. Soon after this Refugio purchased his first tractor to work on the farmland. In order for Refugio to move around, he had to ask to borrow Mr. Garza's truck to get him to and from where he needed to go to work. It was not long until Refugio ran into Mr. Polis and offered to buy his 40 acres for \$20,000. In striking the deal, Refugio promised Mr. Polis that he would pay off his debt to him with in the year of his purchase. With disbelief, Mr. Polis did not believe it was possible for Refugio's promise to come true. Therefore, Mr. Polis made a bet with Refugio stating to him that if he did indeed pay off the land within the year, Mr. Polis would personally buy him a Stetson hat. When that year finally came, Refugio fulfilled his promise to Mr. Polis and payed him the \$20,000 for those 40 acres. Mr. Polis being a man of his word bought Refugio his Stetson hat, which he wore proudly according to his children Ralph and Ramon Luna (Figure 2.3) After Refugio passed away in 1965, due to a car accident, his son Ramon inherited the hat. This tragic car accident left his mother, Maria in fear of ever trying to drive an automobile again, especially since back in those days all autos were standard transmission and it was hard to learn if you did not get the concept of using the stick shift. Sadly, in 1997 the great historical Stetson hat of Refugio Luna was stolen from the residence of Ramon Luna, when thieves broke into his house and along with the hat, they took other possessions from their home as Ramon and his wife Dora Luna were away.

⁸ Mark Reisler, 1976. *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States, 1900-1940*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

As the years rolled by, working on the farm seemed not to be enough for Refugio Luna. He had to make sales to Anglos but did not know how to speak English since he was not educated in that proficiently. That being the case, he would send his sons to school, that way they would get a proper education which became a primary objective for Refugio, the importance of an education. Refugio also took advantage of his kids' education to learn from them, mostly from his oldest son Ralph Luna. Ralph taught his father Refugio everything he knew of the English language so that his father would know what Anglos asked of him, which helped his father learn what to ask them as well. This made transactions go smoother for Refugio; because he was able to understand what the Anglos were asking him, as well as what questions or answers he had for them. Making the kids go to school was useful but after school, they had to work and help in the farm. According to Roberto Luna, Ralph was one of the only one that had gone to school, only completing the second grade just so he could teach his father Refugio how to write and speak English. One of the younger brothers Roberto states, “He had to go pay the bills or whatever he had to go with him, and my other brother Ralph was in second grade at that time. He was running the whole thing here. He wrote and kept notes of everything”.⁹ Stating how important and helpful Ralph Luna was not only to his father but also to his brothers and sisters. Roberto Luna also mentions how his brother Ralph Luna was the primary source of how everything that dealt with paperwork



Figure 2.3- Refugio Luna wearing the Stetson Hat

⁹ Robert Luna, Interview by Lynn Rodriuez, November 5, 2018

or writing came from Ralph as he states, “My dad he didn’t know how to write or read. My dad barely knew how to write letters or a check”. “But at that time my brother, my other brother had the power of attorney to make the check”. Ralph had to pick up the slack for his family especially when their father Refugio passed away.

Ralph Luna was the only one who stood between the farm and paperwork that needed to be done, especially when handing out checks for their Braceros. Before the Braceros, Refugio would do everything and anything he could to provide until Ralph Luna was able to contribute. Once Ralph was drafted to the army, as Roberto Luna says “Yeah, my dad, every day, when my dad started, first, he would work by himself, he went out and picked oranges or whatever work came out. Afterwards he bought the land here and then my brother Cuco came and he would help him here. And my older brother Ralph went to the Army, while Lito stayed here”.¹⁰ Even though they would all work in the farm eventually, Refugio needed all the help he could get when in the farm. He had his sons work with him during the planting season but as soon as the harvest was ready, he needed the extra help.

Around the year of 1955 was when Refugio Luna and his family needed the extra help in picking the harvest off the land. That is when the Braceros came into the farm. A lot of them were illegals. Roberto Luna states, “the ones my dad paid out, lived out in that garage and you see about 10-15 Braceros, illegals crossing (inaudible) of the door waiting to see if there’s work, but my dad used to know a lot of people from Mexico he knew ‘em and they would come out to work and my father said yea. He did not have any place to put ‘em but they stay out there and they put a little stove and everything, you know. I wish we had something like this (gestures to the warehouse we were standing in) but... They just started building their own little palm huts back over there”.¹¹ What helped them get the people they needed was that Refugio knew some of his Braceros from Mexico when he lived there. Having a certain comfort level with them to allow them to stay in their land close to his family.

Back in that time span, people from Mexico were allowed to enter the states more freely since it was not that much of a problem with people trying to cross over in an alarming rate. This is according to Roberto Luna’s interview response “they started bringing some families over there but at that time the, uh, the border patrol left them, they let you, they let them work more because it wasn’t so bad as right now. Back then you could leave, you could go inside the house. Then leave the house closed with just the screen door”.¹² Roberto Luna is stating how then when they did had Braceros working there it was known that they were from Mexico with permission to work for the farmers. One of the younger brothers, Ramon Luna mentions in his interview how they would mostly work in the farm and go to school only. Ramon Luna mentions “with them, but we use to, we use to talk to them, we didn’t have any problems with them there was always good

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Robert Luna, Interview by Lynn Rodriuez, November 5, 2018

communication”,¹³ showing how his parents would not really let them talk to or interact with the Braceros. You could say it was not really as much about allowing them to talk with them but due to the fact that once they got home, they had to get straight to work on the farm leaving little to no time whatsoever to interact.

There was so much to do at the farm that Refugio Luna would not allow his children to participate in any afterschool programs. In Refugio’s mind, he believed that working in the farm was far more important than playing in sports or anything not to deal with academics that took time away from working on the farm. Dora Luna states “he wasn’t allowed, they wanted him to play baseball, he was a good baseball player, he was a pitcher and he enjoyed baseball, but his dad wouldn’t let him participate”, as well as Ramon Luna stating “he never was in sports so he thought work was better, but I did let (Roy our son)”.¹⁴ Ramon clarified that he did not agree that not participating in sports was a must. He figured they could do both if need be as he allowed his son Roy Luna to play in sports. This helped him with his communication skills as Roy explains, “well it helped me to be more social with other people other than just the family, I wanted to do much more but the leash was just that long, but it was just sports and then get back to work as soon as it was done. But some of my friends had been doing it since they were toddlers, I mean it was just like man they had been doing it a long time, and uh I started in junior high”, gives a clear statement on how life at the farm ran through the Luna family. Although Roy Luna was allowed to participate in sports, he was still had to return home and work on the farm.

There were freezes that occurred in the Valley in the 2000’s. The family had to endure the cold but when it came to the crops. Plants were dying from over freezing in the cold snow or giving them some kind of frost bite that ended up them losing a lot of the crop. Well, according to Roberto Luna it actually did the opposite. As Roberto Luna stated “No it didn’t effect anything. The snow it didn’t effect nothing”, when asked if they had any effect to their crops during the freeze. “In fact, it probably works even better”, stated Bobby Luna of the freeze. They had nothing planted at the time the freeze had come in. That is why it did not affect them as much as one would have thought but it did help them in a way that it would kill most if not all the weeds and pests in the land to where they had no need to spray any kind of pesticide. That helped them save money with regard to purchasing and store large amount of pesticide for that kind of application. Not to mention the time they saved to not having to clear or clean the land so that way they could get straight to planting. Bobby Luna explains” Yea it actually works in our favor ‘cause it really, burns the weeds so it kills ‘em, so...”, Roberto Luna inputs “The insects...it’s cold, it’s very cold and it helps us. Because they... a lot of them would die. They’re not used to that”.¹⁵ They had not much to endure from the freeze when it hit the Valley but adapted and used it to their advantage.

¹³ Ramon Luna, interview by Amancio J Chapa IV and Ashly De Leon, October 29, 2018

¹⁴ Ramon Luna, interview by Amancio J Chapa IV and Ashly De Leon, October 29, 2018

¹⁵ Robert Luna, Interview by Lynn Rodriuez, November 5, 2018

Chapter Three: Ascertaining the Land

Myrabel Cantu, John Gutierrez, Rafael Martinez, Lynn Rodriguez, Mark Sifuentes and
Cullen Turk

Geology of Luna Properties

Parts of the Lower Rio Grande Valley can be referred to as the South Texas Sand Sheet (STSS). The South Texas Sand Sheet is a geologic description of the region between the Nueces and the Rio Grande rivers because there is a layer of sand that covers the terrain; especially within this region where there are no running rivers or streams. However, since there is evidence of human occupation that dates back thousands of years, there had to be some water resources that could help sustain life (both human and animal) throughout time. One such explanation can be credited to the existence of deflation troughs. Deflation troughs are areas on the land that hold water.¹⁶ With no easy access to running water, even in the surrounding areas, it is obvious how unique it is for this area to be inhabited by anyone. Yet, the use of the land goes back to 3500-6000 B.C.¹⁷ These deflation troughs are filled usually after heavy rain or after storms that produce heavy rains, for a period of time.¹⁸ They can last for a very long period of time and as long as there is rain, the trough should be a sort of temporary lake in the area. And according to Dr. Gonzalez et al 2014, the first deflation troughs are believed to have been around during the late Pleistocene area based off evidence of mammoths, ground sloths, horse, and extinct bison found near large deflation troughs: these animals are considered to be consistent with the Pleistocene era.¹⁹ This identifies that the land has had these deflation troughs for a long period of time. It also shows how the area was and has been an area where life has been around and somewhat thriving even though the land did not have an abundance of water. It was able to support life previously because of the deflation troughs which held up to at least a meter of water and last over a year if the rain is heavy enough, as was the case after hurricane Beulah in 1967.²⁰ This is important because one of the hypotheses of the article is how areas near the STSS could have human occupation because of deflation troughs. The Luna property is an area near the STSS. The end of the STSS is La Sal del Rey but the hypothesis seeks to prove how human occupation could be possible based on the lands of some of the farms being researched in the CHAPS program. Juanita Luna Navarro's farm property holds evidence of one such deflation trough.

During the CHAPS program's time on some of the Luna properties, they dug a series of boreholes into the soil to see what kind of soil was on the land. The tool used to boreholes was a tool called an auger which has a helical bit for creating these holes in the ground. The reasons for digging these holes was for further research of soils in the Valley

¹⁶ Gonzalez, Juan, L., Skowronek, Russel, k., Lovett, Bobbie, L. "Deflation Troughs, Water, and Prehistoric Occupation on the Margins of the South Texas Sand Sheet", (2014) p. 71.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 72.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 71.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 75.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 75.

and to see how good the land was for farming and what it consisted of over time. Two boreholes were dug on Aunt Janie's property (one in the direct vicinity of a former deflation trough) and two boreholes were dug on Roberto Luna's property. This activity was led by Dr. Juan Gonzalez as in previous conductions of boreholes on other family's properties in past reports.

Previous boreholes would reach the caliche layer of soil found throughout the soil of the valley at around 1.5 meters to about 2 meters. Similar findings were found on the Luna property as well. On Janie's property, Luna 1 was dug far behind her house close to the edge of her property line (Figure 3.1). That borehole's results displayed how far the water table was on that section of her property, which was at around the two-meter area, below the surface. The first 0.8 meters was made up of Silt Loam which is dark brown. Silt Loam is known to contain no less than 70% silt and clay, and no less than 20% sand as well. The next .8 to 1.2 meters was made up of brown Sandy loam and is known to be the type of soil for planting or gardening. It consists of mostly sand and sometimes it has some silt and clay. The soil is known for how well it does when it comes to drainage of water. The last layer of soil found in Luna 1 was Silt Loam at about 1.2 meters into about 2 meters down and hitting the water table, but this Silt Loam was light brown. Luna 2 was 110 meters away from Luna 1 and was conducted on the deflation trough found on a part of Janie's property. What that borehole displayed to the CHAPS students was that for most of the first meter dug down was that the soil was made up of mostly the dark brown silt loam. Then, just before the auger hit the water table, it hit silt loam that was light brown, which was also referenced as the caliche layer when we couldn't bore a hole deeper into the ground. But some of the findings in Luna 2 proved the hypothesis of the article previously mentioned. Organisms were found in the deflation trough's soil.

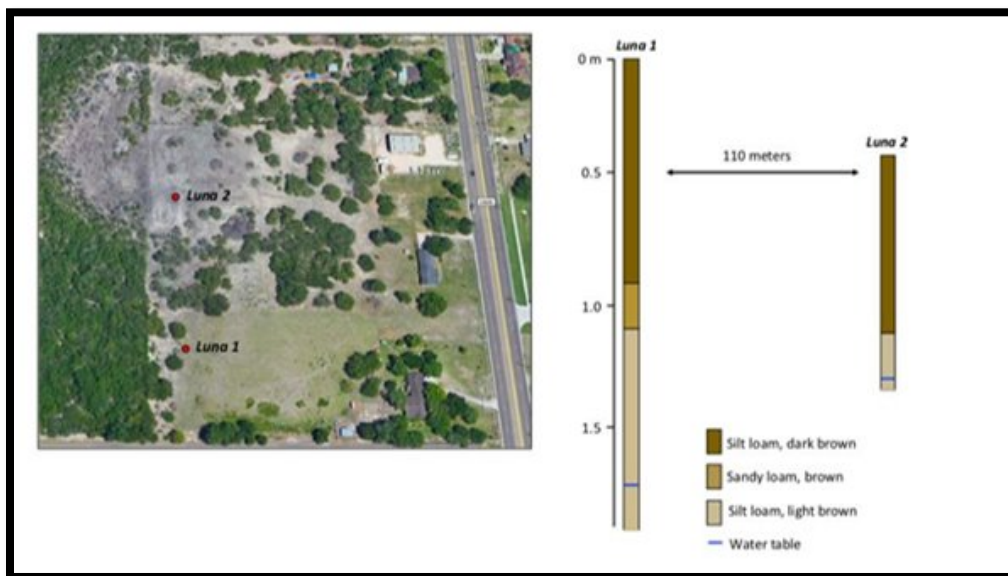


Figure 3.1: This is an aireal view of Janie's property: marker with the areas where the 1st two boreholes were dug.

Boreholes labeled Luna 3 and Luna 4 were conducted on Roberto's property and were 100 meters apart from each other (Figure 3.2 and 3.3). But they had similar results. Luna 3 which was conducted closer to the house than 4, displayed sandy loam up until about 0.6 meters below the surface. After that, the rest of the soil was brown silt loam. Luna 4 was dug a little further out from where the house was as you can see in the photo. It had similar findings as Luna 3. The first 0.6 meters was dark brown sandy loam soil. The rest of the soil up to the water table and the caliche layer was brown silt loam.



Figure 3.2: Image of some of the CHAP's students and Dr. Gonzalez using the auger to bore a hole on Roberto Luna's property

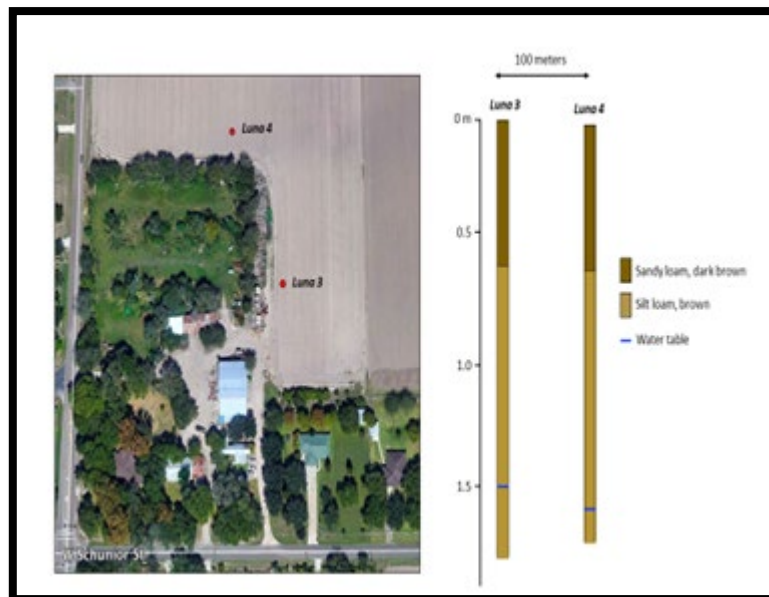


Figure 3.3: An aircal view of Roberto Luna's property with the areas marked where the last two boreholes were dug.

What the lay of the land looked like before irrigation

Before irrigation was implemented in the RGV, the land mainly comprised of shrub land and thorn scrub within a floodplain. The climate of the RGV is humid subtropical and semiarid.²¹ Though the most important thing that matters to farmer's before irrigation infrastructure was implemented was the rainfall that occurred yearly. Rainfall is highly erratic with individual rainfall events that can possibly make up the yearly rainfall.²² This makes the RGV susceptible to prolong drought times which in turn for farmers creates an environment of uncertainty of whether crops will survive. Before Falcon Dam was built, the RGV was heavily susceptible to flooding due to lack of control of water flow from the Rio Grande. Farmers had to plant their crops when floods subsided or in river bottoms. Another solution they used was digging deep wells that were hand operated 24 hour a day to water crops and to keep livestock troughs full.²³

The Diversity of birds and insects found in the Rio Grande Valley

The subtropical climate is a big reason why many different bird species migrate through this area and south during the winter months. The abundance in shelter and food among other needs that the many species of birds needs shows that this area is a suitable for many different bird species with different niches. Many insects in this area as are butterflies. The RGV is known as a species rich area for butterflies in the United States.²⁴ Thus making the RGV a hub for many butterfly watchers as is the same for bird watchers. It has been observed that more than 280 butterfly species have been documented in the RGV from at least 6 families and 20 subfamilies.²⁵

During our field work at the Luna properties, we were able to see a different bird species. On Roberto's property we found a Eurasian-collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*). We saw a bird climbing milkweed with a seed. Another bird seen on the property flying by was the Golden-fronted Woodpecker (*Melanerpes aurifrons*). On Janie's property we saw a Couch Kingbird (*Tyrannus couchii*) (Figure 3.4) flying by as well as a Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) (Figure 3.5). Throughout this entire survey we were accompanied by Becky Reyes of the Edinburg birding center.

²¹ Leslie, D.M., Jr., 2016, An international borderland of concern—Conservation of biodiversity in the Lower Rio Grande Valley: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2016–5078, 120 p.

²² Ibid, p.6.

²³ Santa Ana, R. 2017. Agriculture tells the history of the Rio Grande Valley | AgriLife Today. AgriLife Today. Retrieved from <https://today.agrilife.org/2017/01/03/valley-agriculture-history/>.

²⁴ Leslie, p.32

²⁵ Ibid, p.32



Fig. 3.4 Couch kingbird



Fig 3.5 Northern Mockingbird

A number of different insect species were also encountered during our fieldwork at the Luna properties. A queen butterfly was identified (*Danaus gilippus*) and a black saddlebag dragonfly (*Tramea lacerata*). A common insect found throughout the Valley known as Harvester Ants (*Pogonomyrmex barbatus*) were found abundantly around the properties (Figure 3.6).



Figure 3.6 Harvester ant

An Anacua tree (*Ehretia anacua*) was found whose leaves were perforated with many holes caused by the Anacua Tortoise Beetle (*Coptocycla texana*) (Figure 3.7). The Anacua Tortoise Beetle is an insect that consumes the Anacua tree leaves and lives its life cycle mainly feeding on that plant. This is the only species that feeds on leaves whereas other species of it feed on sweet potatoes.



Figure 3.7 Anacua tortoise beetle

Flora found on the properties

A majority of the flora here is adapted to the low rain and high temperature climate that is found in the Rio Grande Valley. The Valley is comprised of shrub and or thorn bush with trees that are able to withstand the low yearly rainfall. Many tree species were documented when we visited the Luna properties. Janie Navarro's property had a prosperous Anacua tree which is a common tree down here in southern Texas (Figure 3.8).



Figure 3.8 Anacua tree

Many other tree species such as mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), retama (*Parkinsonia aculeata*) and huisache trees (*Acacia farnesiana*) were found during our visit. Plenty of shrubs and grasses were found as well though many of the shrubs found had thorns which are typical for plants that are located in semiarid climates. The reason for this is to avoid predation from herbivores. Cactus were abundantly found on the property as well such as Night blooming cereus (*Peniocereus greggii*) and Prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia*



Figure 3.9 Prickly pear cactus

engelmannii) in which they are covered with thorns in which stop animals from consuming them but allow for habitat for some birds and insects (Figure 3.9)

Natural Disasters

The RGV often has very hot summers and mild winters, with regular cold fronts each winter. This is mainly during December through January when the probability of below freezing temperatures, even severe freezes are more probable.²⁶ A major hurricane that hit the RGV in 1967 and left many of the communities in disarray was Hurricane Beulah. This storm came roaring in with wind speeds as high as 140 miles per hour with a storm surge of about 20 feet. The flooding that came with the storm lingered for a significant amount of time afterward devastated the RGV and especially the farmers. Roberto Luna recounts how there was no form of government aid in those days FEMA did not exist so many of the roads that they used had to be cleaned by the community members themselves. “In Beulah 1967 they didn’t helped us we had to clean the roads we had to clean nobody paid us you had to do your own.”²⁷ Norma Luna also recalls the devastation that occurred on the family farm due to Beulah. “So we were okay. But the Uncles lost their crops.”²⁸ Torrential rains in an area that is known to flood easily is a recipe for disaster especially when no protocols at the time were in place to combat the flooding. In turn with no ways to deal with the flood waters many residents in the RGV were dealing with stagnant flood waters for weeks after the hurricane making conditions perfect for mosquitos to flourish. (Figure 3.10)



Figure 3.10 Damaged citrus orchards

²⁶ Leslie, p.6.

²⁷ Oral History Interview, Roberto Luna and Roberto Luna Jr, interview by Evelyn Cantu and Mark Sifuentes, October 28, 2018, transcript

²⁸ Oral History Interview, Norma Luna Rydl, Interview by Cullen Turk and Olga Moya, October 20, 2018, transcript

Freezes in the RGV are a big threat to many farmers especially those that primarily grow citrus. When temperatures drop severely, many plants will freeze and die immediately thus being a major problem to many farmers who rely heavily on their crops. The 1983 freeze was a tough loss for many farmers in the Valley. Rodolfo Luna recounts the 1983 freeze as a big loss and a tough time for the family. “Yeah, I think- we had one- that year we had cabbage and it-it, you know, would crack and yeah it was no good because of the freeze. The water would get it a little moisture and then it would just turn into ice and it would just pop.”²⁹ A massive amount of citrus in the RGV was lost due to this freeze. About 69,000 valuable acres of citrus before the freeze and after roughly 20,000 acres were left.³⁰ This had a significant impact in the local economy and on many citrus farmers putting businesses and farmers out of business.

Luna Family Properties: Surrounding Wildlife and Hunting

The Rio Grande Valley has always had a unique wildlife habitat that has varied over time. On its northern margin is what is known to geologists as the South Texas Sand Sheet, an area that has no flowing water systems. However, the presence of deflation troughs, and their unique ability to retain water for substantial periods of time, allowed the Rio Grande Valley to sustain a diverse and robust variety of wildlife.³¹ As explained in the Geological section of this chapter, during the Pleistocene era this land sustained large animals including mammoths, bison, horses, camels, and even giant sloths. Human settlements, though sparse, have also thrived here for thousands of years collecting the resources and taking advantage of the retained water.³² Today the Rio Grande Valley stills supports a unique and healthy variety of wildlife. Eco-tourists and hunters come to the Valley to experience its broad animal diversity within sanctuaries, refuges, and the surrounding thicket itself. Modern irrigation has allowed farmers and ranchers to maintain vast acres of crops and livestock. Agriculture and grazing lands border the brush-line or thicket. It is within these fields, ranches, and thickets that much of the wildlife is found.

The Luna family has plenty of experience farming and hunting the surrounding areas for decades. The five Luna brothers (Fig. 3.11) were avid hunters. Refugio Jr., Roberto, Rodolfo, Ramon, and Lito Luna had not only a reputation as hard working farmers but also as seasoned hunters. On several occasions the brothers had their photographs in the local paper (Fig. 3.12-3.14). Using various rifles, .243 and .270 caliber, and archery (bow-hunting), the brothers Luna would hunt deer mostly using blinds within Moore Airfield and other ranches around the town of Encino, an area north-west of Edinburg. Though they were skilled hunters, sometimes there were quiet arguments debating about who got to make the kill. These “discussions” took so long that sometimes the buck would get away.³³

²⁹ Oral History Interview, Roberto Luna and Roberto Luna Jr, interview by Evelyn Cantu and Mark Sifuentes, October 28, 2018, transcript

³⁰ Essex, A. 2011. Valley’s freeze history. The Monitor. Retrieved from https://www.themonitor.com/news/local/article_9e6e62a7-b0cf-5d92-b562-435675280bba.html

³¹ Gonzalez, Juan, L., Skowronek, Russel, k., Lovett, Bobbie, L. “Deflation Troughs, Water, and Prehistoric Occupation on the Margins of the South Texas Sand Sheet”, p. 71 t.

³² Gonzalez, p. 72, 75.

³³ Oral History Interview, Ramon Luna, Dora Luna, and Roy Luna, interview by Manuel Vera, 2018, transcript



Figure 3.11 Luna brothers Ramon, Rodolfo, Romulo, Roberto and Refugio Jr. c. 1960

Throughout the years the Luna family has mostly hunted white-tail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), javelina (peccary- *Pecari tajacu*), wild pig/boar (*Sus scrofa*), white-wing dove (*Zenaida asiatica*), and wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*). The De La Garza Meat Market on Freddy Gonzalez Dr. and South Veterans Blvd. in Edinburg was where the Luna family had their meat processed. Through the interviews we found out that though hunting was a favorite past-time, work came first.³⁴ Target practice and bird-hunting were also a favorite past-time for the Luna brothers as the CHAPS students discovered many shotgun shells, .12 and .20 gauge. Several bones were also found, one coyote skull that was found had an apparent bullet hole in its forehead. Rattlesnakes (*Crotalus atrox*) were common enough and though, some were caught and sold for their skins and meat, many were gathered into a pit for several months awaiting to be sold to local rattlesnake round-ups, specifically the round-up in Freer, Texas, now going on its 54th anniversary.³⁵ On occasion snapping turtles (*Chelydra serpentina*) were captured. Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), jackrabbits (*Lepus timidus*), and opossums (*Didelphis virginiana*) were much more common a decade ago according to Robert and Bobby Luna. Their ranch dogs made quick sport of opossums.³⁶ Farm animals were regularly raised and slaughtered or sold as a way of life of the farm. Rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) and pigeons (*Columba Livia domestica*) were included within the Luna's livestock. Robert Luna claims that the javelina were much more common than they are now. But now wild pigs/feral hogs are abundant. This is apparently due to the King Ranch releasing pregnant female farm pigs into the wild which have multiplied to the detriment of the regional farmer.³⁷ These pigs are now considered an invasive species that

³⁴ Oral History Interview, Ramon Luna, Dora Luna, and Roy Luna, interview by Amancio J. Chapa, October 29, 2018, transcript

³⁵ Oral History Interview, Roberto Luna and Roberto Luna Jr., interview by Evelyn Cantu and Mark Sifuentes, October 28, 2018, transcript

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Ibid

cause devastation to natural and domesticated vegetation. The pigs love to uproot corn crops and the Lunas love to hunt them. Rodolfo and his wife Celsa relay that Horned-Toad Lizards (*Phrynosoma*) are very rare now but they have sighted owls (unknown), wood-ducks (*Aix sponsa*), cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), humming-birds (various), and even a kingfisher (*Ceyx azureus*) and small flocks of parrots, possibly Green Parakeets (*Psittacara holochlorus*) or Red Crowned Parrots (*Amazona viridigenalis*).³⁸ This shows us that animal species have fluctuated throughout the decades and as the Rio Grande Valley has transformed and evolved so too has its wildlife.



Figure 3.12

Luna men with the first deer of the season (left to right) Refugio Luna, young Bobby Luna, Roberto Luna, and Rodolfo Luna

³⁸ Oral History Interview, Rodolfo Luna, Joshua Valadez, and Selza Luna, interview by John Gutierrez and Abby Espinoza, October 25, 2018, transcript



Figure 3.13
Rodolfo Luna with buck



Figure 3.14
Luna Brothers (left to right) Refugio Jr., Lito, Roberto, Ramon, and Rodolfo

Original Luna Family Homes and Other Material Culture

Original Family Homes and Additional Structures

Members of the CHAPS Program were allowed to walk the properties owned by Maria Juanita “Janie” Luna Navarro and Roberto Luna. These properties have been in the family for generations and have remnants of previous homes on their grounds. Houses have either been moved to different locations or reutilized. Although the first property visited by the students was Janie’s pasture on N 23rd St., Roberto’s property was where the Luna family got their start in farming.

Roberto Luna’s property was the site of the first original home owned by Refugio and Maria Luna. It was a small wood frame home on the northeast corner, at the rear, of the property,³⁹ (Figure 3.15). Ralph Luna recalled having to run a long distance to catch the bus to school since the home was set so far back from the intersecting roads.⁴⁰ The first home was only at its first location for two years (1945 – 46) and was later moved after Refugio paid off the deed to that plot of land. He moved the house to the corner of Schunior and Depot Streets. The last three Luna sisters were born in the wooden frame house (Figure 3.16). The original house was added onto until 1960 when it was replaced by the red brick house that is present today and occupied by Roberto Luna (Figure 3.17). Refugio’s sister, Jesusa, bought part of the original wooden home from Refugio, and it still stands on Mon Mack Rd. and 17 ½ Mile Line.⁴¹ The rest of the original wooden frame home is in Santa Rosa.

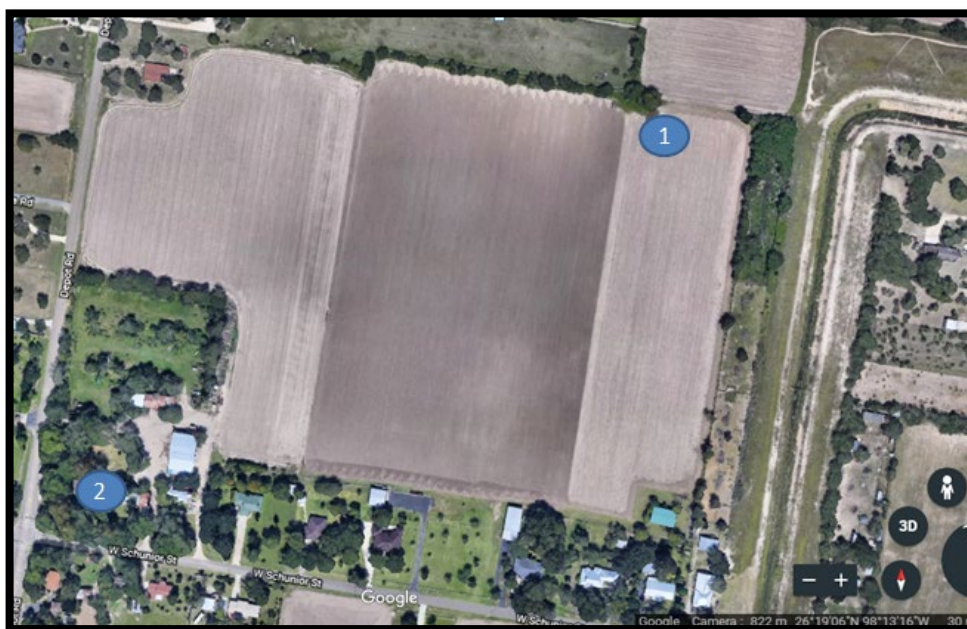


Figure 3.15 Aerial view of Roberto’s Property; Area labeled “1” indicates first location of Refugio and Maria’s house; Blue dot labeled “2” indicates where the house was later moved.

³⁹ Roseann Bacha-Garza, email message to Lynn Rodriguez, Rafael Martinez, Myrabel Cantu, Cullen Turk, Mark Sifuentes, and John Gutierrez, October 23, 2018

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Roseann Bacha-Garza, email message to Lynn Rodriguez, Rafael Martinez, Myrabel Cantu, Cullen Turk, Mark Sifuentes, and John Gutierrez, October 23, 2018



Figure 3.16 Original Refugio and Maria Luna wooden frame home



Figure 3.17 Southwest view of Refugio's (now Roberto's) red brick home located at the corner of Depot and Schunior Streets

In addition to building homes for his family, Refugio built quarters where his workers, Braceros, could live. Originally the Braceros lived in a big shed out in the field filled with cots and a stove until the Braceros' quarters were built in 1949, a year after building a cistern on the property (1948).⁴² Refugio built the Braceros' quarters with a man from Mexico who was experienced in building homes out of cement. The homes were supposed to be able to withstand hurricanes. The whole building was built out of cement including the ceiling because Refugio had plans to make the building two stories someday (Figure 3.18). The quarters were located about 15 meters east of the main house, and the Braceros that lived there were the most trusted and worked on the farm all year. Seasonal workers stayed living in a shed in the field. These year-round workers took on tasks such as irrigation, hoeing, and driving tractors.⁴³



Figure 3.18 Outside the south wall of the Braceros' Quarters

The Luna family used Bracero labor from 1945 through the 1960's.⁴⁴ The Braceros' quarters still stands on Roberto Luna's property, giving a glimpse into the life of a Mexican Bracero. The block walls have stood strong since the years they housed field workers, just as Refugio intended. The juxtaposition of the building to the main house shows how much trust there was between the workers and the Luna family (Figure 3.19). There was a main room in the building which was connected to two other rooms, one to the east and one to the west, via wooden doorways (Appendix Z). In the room towards the east of the building was a table with timeworn plates on them (Figure 3.24). This suggests that food was eaten there by people who lived in the building. There is also a filing cabinet containing old check stubs and other office documents in the room (Figure 3.23) indicating the building is now used for storage. In the other room there is an old stove and bathtub (Figures 3.20 and 3.21). Braceros may have used the stove during their time in the quarters, but it may also be another appliance stored in the building. Ralph mentioned that the large, empty main room was once used as a garage for their cars (Figure 3.22).

⁴² Roseann Bacha-Garza, email message to Lynn Rodriguez, Rafael Martinez, Myrabel Cantu, Cullen Turk, Mark Sifuentes, and John Gutierrez, October 23, 2018

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Ibid



3.19 View of Roberto's red brick home from the west door of the Braceros' Quarters



Figure 3.20 Stove found in the west room of the Braceros' Quarter



Figure 3.21 Bathtub found in the west room of the Braceros' Quarters



Figure 3.22 Mark Sifuentes (left), Myrabel Cantu (middle), and Edward Gonzalez (right) standing in the south area of the main room of the Braceros' Quarters



Figure 3.23 Janie looking at receipts and other documents taken from the filing cabinet



Figure 3.24 Dishes on a table in the east room.

In the front of Janie's house is a slab of cement with steps attached to them (Figure 3.25). Janie mentioned the house that stood on the cement slab belonged to her before she built the house she lives in today. After building her new home, the original house was sold to Norma Luna Rydl. Norma now rents the house out to tenants. The home has since been moved to the corner of 23rd Street and Freddy Gonzalez Avenue⁴⁵ (Figure 3.26). There is another slab of cement on Janie's property that also held an original Luna home. Part of the home has since been moved to Mon Mack Rd,⁴⁶ and Janie told Professor Roseann Bacha-Garza that another part is in San Carlos, Texas. Janie was able to point out some original fence posts and end-posts at the rear of the grazing field (Figure 3.31). The fence posts were covered in barbed wire (Figure 3.32), and she noted that both fence posts and end-posts were made out of mesquite.⁴⁷



Figure 3.25 Cement slab with steps in front of Janie's house



Figure 3.26 Janie's original home now at N. 23rd and Freddy Gonzalez Ave.

⁴⁵ Roseann Bacha-Garza, email message to Myrabel Cantu and Lynn Rodriguez, November 24, 2018

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Roseann Bacha-Garza, email message to Lynn Rodriguez, Rafael Martinez, Myrabel Cantu, Cullen Turk, Mark Sifuentes, and John Gutierrez, October 9, 2018



Figure 3.27 Original mesquite end-posts on Janie’s property near the rear.



Figure 3.28 Original mesquite fence post with barbed wire on Janie’s property

Material Culture

Researchers use a variety of approaches to understand the past. These include the written word – documents; the spoken word- oral histories; observed behavior ethnography, and its cousins ethnohistory, and ethnoarchaeology; and preserved behavior- the archaeological or material record.⁴⁸ Significantly, each of these approaches have their own biases and thus no single avenue of inquiry should be privileged over another. Indeed, we must be observant of all the concomitant aspects, which are part of this holistic approach. When approaching the modern era, the “spoken word” may be found in published first person accounts, in letters, or oral histories. When combined with documents and broader ethnographic observations a broader perspective may be perceived. Marley Brown used this approach in his study of the three-hundred-year-old Mott Farm in Rhode

⁴⁸ Schuyler, Robert L. “The Spoken Word, the Written Word, Observed Behavior and Preserved Behavior, the Contexts Available to the Archaeologist.” *The Conference on Historic Site Archaeology Papers* (1977), 1 (Pt. 2): 99-120.

Island.⁴⁹ Material culture plays an important role in understanding behavior. Of course, artifacts or objects reflect behavior in a number of ways. Their form and material make-up can dictate a primary function. But their deposition and juxtaposition with other artifacts may indicate different behaviors than those for which they were initially meant.

On the Luna property there are a number of artifacts whose location informs us of the behaviors of the people who deposited them. At the main farm (Roberto Luna's) large numbers of shotgun shells were found adjacent to the homestead/house. While the family enjoys hunting⁵⁰ no one mentioned hunting directly adjacent to their home. Adjacent to these concentrations of shells our survey found 3 golf balls. In the 2017 study of the Fike family in east Edinburg similar relationships were noted. In that study it was thought these represented two forms of recreational activity. Cullen Turk⁵¹ recalls that golf balls are often used for practice in lieu of clay targets, but after clarification from Norma⁵², he discovered the golf balls were indicative of Roberto's grandchildren playing in the fields.

Roberto's property was separated into two fields when collecting material culture. Field 1 was on the eastside of the property where the first site of the original Luna family home stood. There was no evidence of the foundation of the home, but there were pieces of glass that seemed to belong to a mason jar (Figure 3.29). Dolores Vega and Aunt Janie recalled their mother canning and storing tomatoes during the two years the house was on that part of the property.⁵³ There was also a darker brown shard of glass near the homestead site as well. Dr. Russell Skowronek, an anthropology professor at the University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley, examined the brown shard of glass and confirmed it to be part of a broken beer bottle. Part of a tin can was also found near the location. Shotgun shells were found mainly around the edges of the field and many near the old homestead location. Roberto recalls the family being able to shoot their guns near the home since it was a common practice in their neighborhood.⁵⁴ Some white shells were found sporadically throughout the field. Seven sets of deer tracks were spotted passing through the field from the northwest down toward the southeast end. Deer were suspected to have access to the land by way of a nearby drainage ditch when they would get lost.⁵⁵ An old glove, which could have been dropped during field work, was found near the center of the field. Dr. Skowronek said that since the property was within a floodplain, it was not likely that any stone would be found. The only stone that was found in that field was two small pieces of caliche. Various coyote and cow bones were found in the same field as the homestead site (Appendix AA)

⁴⁹ Brown, Marley, "The Use of Oral and Documentary Sources in Historical Archaeology: Ethnohistory at the Mott Farm." In *Historical Archaeology: A Guide to Substantive and Theoretical Contributions* (1978), edited by Robert Schuyler, pp. 284-287. (Baywood Publishing Co., Inc., Farmingdale, N.Y.)

⁵⁰ Oral History Interview, Norma Luna Rydl and Esther Luna Montemayor, interviewed by Olga Moya and Cullen Turk, October 20, 2018

⁵¹ Personal communication, November 26, 2018

⁵² Cullen Turk, email message to Lynn Rodriguez, December 1, 2018

⁵³ Roseann Bacha-Garza, email message to Lynn Rodriguez, Rafael Martinez, Myrabel Cantu, Cullen Turk, Mark Sifuentes, and John Gutierrez, October 30, 2018

⁵⁴ Oral History Interview Roberto Luna and Roberto Luna Jr., interview by Evelyn Cantu and Mark Sifuentes, October 28, 2018, transcript

⁵⁵ Oral History Interview Rodolfo Luna, Joshua Valadez, and Selza Luna, interview by John Gutierrez and Abby Espinoza, October 25, 2018, transcript



Figure 3.29 Material Culture gathered from Field 1 of Roberto's property; gathered October 29, 2018

The second field on the property was on the west side of the property, north of the main house and just south of Dolores' property. There, the students found shotgun shells, golf balls, plastic pieces, some stones burnt corn husks, ceramic shards, land snail shells, animal bones and a blue metal rod. Shotgun shells in this location may be linked to running off pests. There was also a handle to an unknown tool along with a red plastic object that seemed to be part of a bigger container or device (Figure 3.30). Marbles and a small foam watermelon were found in the field as well indicating either floodwater sweeping material onto the field or foot traffic through the field. Golf balls in the field could have gotten there through recreational use by neighbors or members of the family.



Figure 3.30 Material culture gathered from Field 2 of Roberto's property; gathered on October 29, 2018

On Janie's property - the southern boundary of the property was littered with beer bottles, cigarillo, and cigarette remnants (Figure 3.31). These are not associated with Juanita's family but represent primary deposition of trash from their neighbors at "Famoso Fuego." Famoso Fuego is a nightclub which is open from 8pm to 2am every Friday and Saturday. Explanations for the trash may include either patrons leaving the establishment and throwing their "trash" over the fence or the management cleaning their parking lot and disposing of this detritus over the fence. Janie also mentioned that floodwaters bring items from the other side of her fence into her yard.⁵⁶ Janie recalls people hunting on the field to the southwest of her property, so shotgun shells were on the ground in that field before they washed onto her land.⁵⁷



Figure 3.31 Material culture found from Janie's pasture; gathered October 8, 2018

Shotgun shells were found towards the rear of the property, (Appendix AA) for the map of shotgun shells found on Janie's property. These shells may have been the aftermath of Janie, or one of the members of her family, fighting off predators from getting on their land. A skull was found at the rear of the grazing land which is suspected to belong to a coyote (Figure 3.32). Coyotes may have tried to get on Janie's land because she houses chickens near the fence on the south side of the property. A goat skull was also found (Figure 3.32), but this is thought to have belonged to the family or a neighbor.⁵⁸ A jaw bone belonging to a gray fox as well as other animal bones were also found on the property, see Appendix M for the full list of animal bones found on both properties. The variety of animal bones found on Janie's property may be due to the fact that her property borders wild brush land. Beyond the west border of her pasture is a forest of mesquite which is home to wild animals.

⁵⁶ Personal communication, October 8, 2018

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Oral History Interview Rodolfo Luna, Joshua Valadez, and Selza Luna, interview by John Gutierrez and Abby Espinoza, October 25, 2018, transcript



Figure 3.32 (Left to right) Coyote skull with bullet wound, animal vertebrae, gray fox jawbone, two animal bones, and a goat skull

Projectile points

One purpose of the CHAPS Program is to study the past from the identification of found projectile points artifacts. By identifying these artifacts by material, type, color, and period, CHAPS seek to understand the history of those who have lived in the Rio Grande Valley thousands of years ago. There is evidence that people arrived in the Americas during the Pleistocene Epoch 20,000 years ago, or during the last Ice Age. People unconsciously migrated due to the availability of resources, to hunt, gather, and procreate. Pleistocene fauna in Texas would have included of horses, mammoths, and bison throughout the regions. During the Holocene, south Texas region was a harsh area for native life, with a semiarid landscape and riparian environments from which water was a reliable resource. Natives of south Texas or ‘Coahuiltecans’ as referred to by the Spanish, were Nomadic people who survived with the use of tools and weapons such as spears. The Coahuiltecans consisted of groups or tribes living on both sides of the Rio Grande as hunter-gatherers. There were different groups of people living throughout South Texas, each with a distinctive name and territory. By examining points found by the Luna family in the RGV, one can better identify to what group and period each point was synonymous with.

Over the years Ralph Luna has found some projectile point artifacts on his farm and in other fields. The first seven points were found after a freeze in the La Joya citrus area while he was cutting trees in 1984 (Figure 3.33). During this time Ralph was working with the Federal Crop Insurance Agency. Points numbers 1, 4, and 6, were made from chert, a tough rock material that was used in prehistoric tools and weapons. Point 2 was harder to identify with its white speckles, however it turned out to be made from petrified wood which is a material created by volcanic ash that fell on forested area 27 million years ago. Point 3 also turned out to be rhyolite, which is a type of volcanic rock that is light in color with a grainy composition. Point 7 was a manufactured point, (not an artifact) which was made from chert without a distinctive appearance. Point 5 was also identified as Rhyolite, the same material as point 3. Matamoros points identified as points 4-6 are synonymous with

groups around the Late Archaic period 1000-2500 B.C. The Matamoras points can be distinguished by their small triangular, or subtriangular, unstamped shape. Points 2, 3, and 9 are grouped to the Late Archaic as well, however the appearance of the well-rounded base by the removal of one or two arc-shaped flakes is distinctive of Catan projectile points.⁵⁹

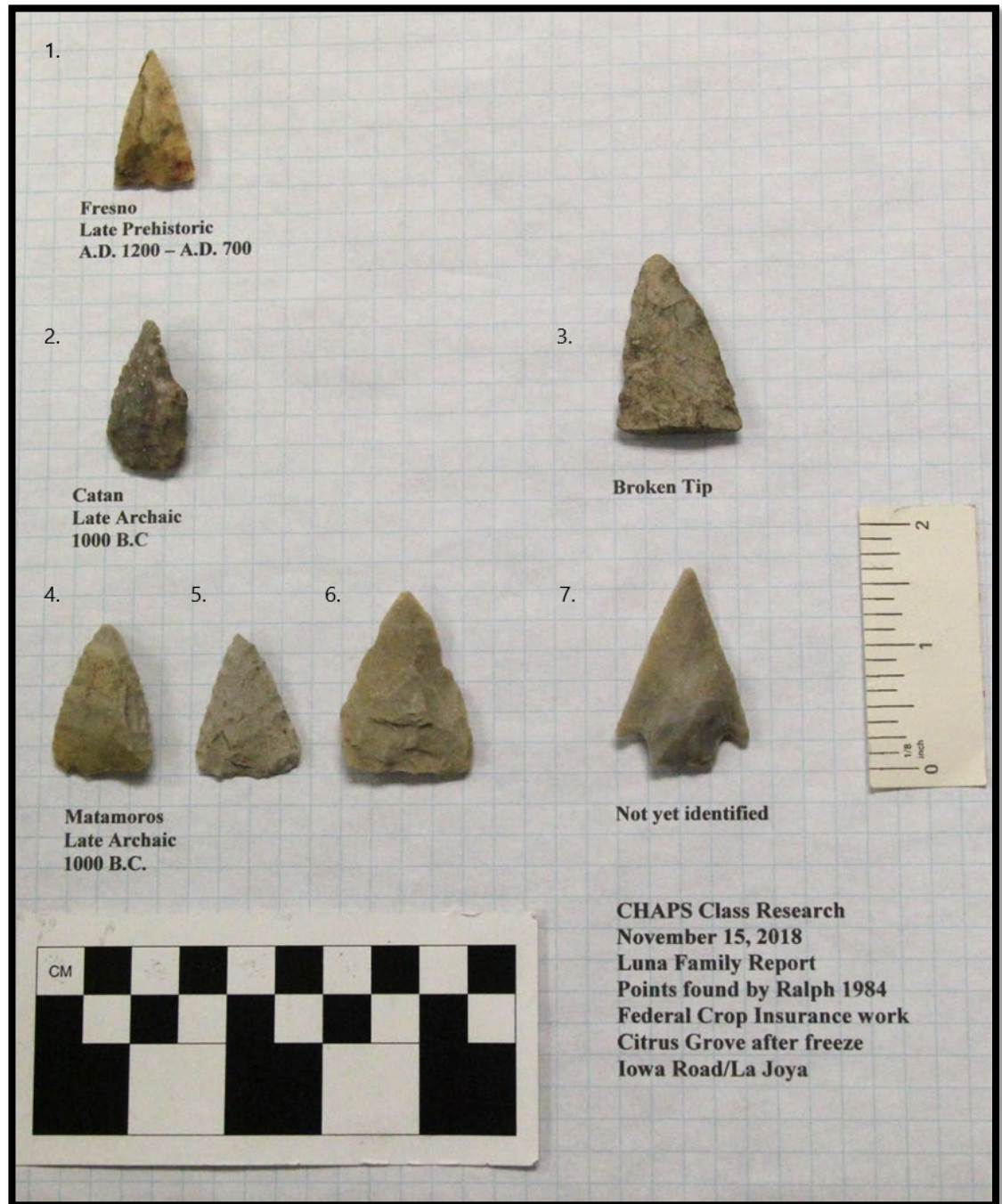


Figure 3.33 Points found by Ralph Luna in 1984

⁵⁹Turner, Ellen Sue, and Thomas R. Hester. *A Field Guide to Stone Artifacts of Texas Indians*. (Texas Monthly Press, Inc., 1985), 78-122.

On the Luna farm, Ralph Luna also found three projectile points (Figure 3.33). They were found on his farmland (Figure 3.34), now his pastureland, in the late 1950s. He found them on his property after the land was disked. The farmland was later turned into pastureland in the 1970s. Point 8 is an Ensor point which comes from the Transitional Archaic period from 300 – 1000 BC. Point 9 with the dark appearance is made from volcanic rock, not quite like obsidian, but noted to appear more like basalt. Point 10 was identified as a Tortugas point, made from Rhyolite dating from the Middle Archaic period of 2500 – 3500 B.C. The three points found by Ralph Luna on his property are distinctive of the south Texas region. Matamoros points additionally can be found in both south Texas and northeastern Mexico.⁶⁰

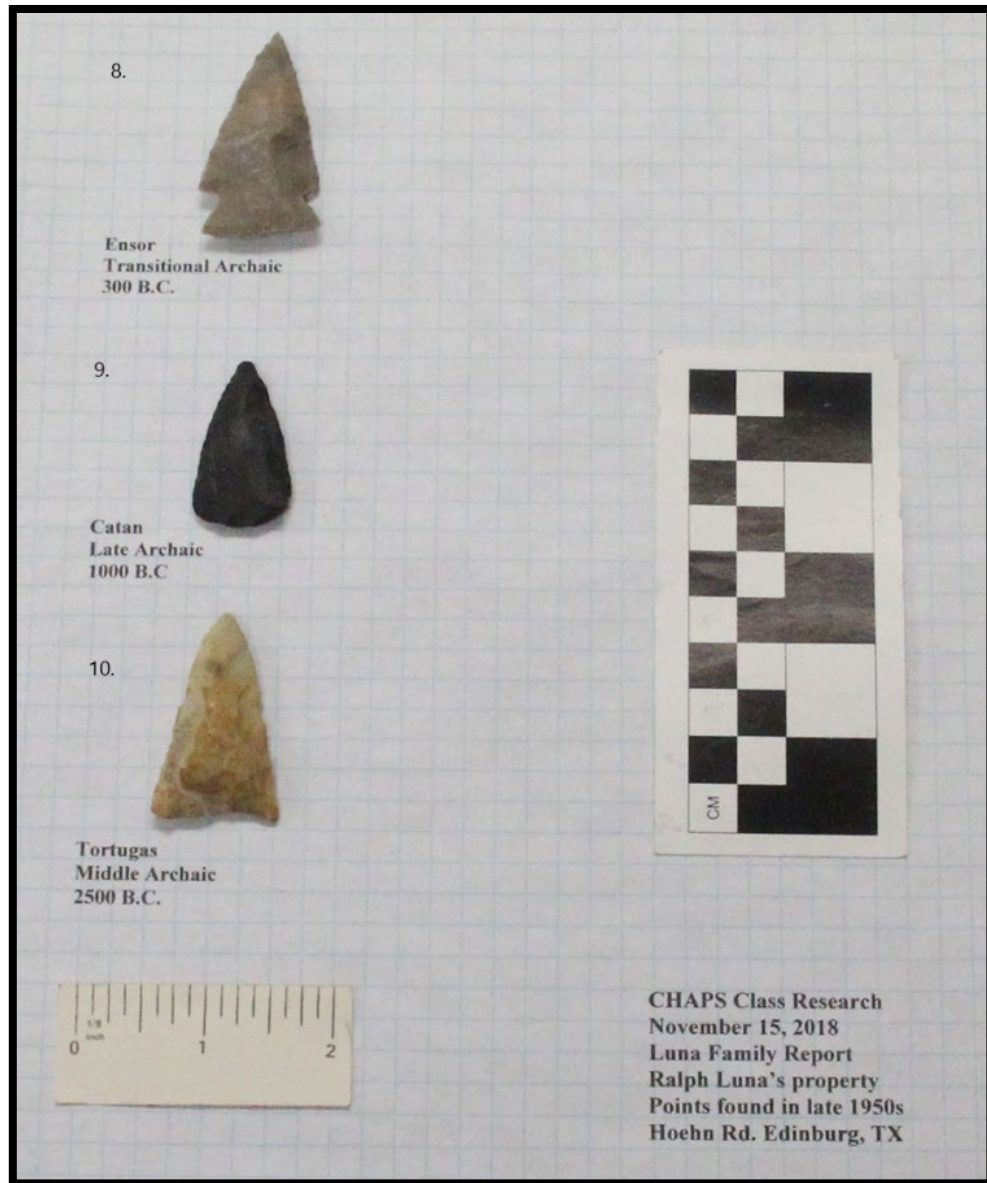


Figure 3.34 Points found on Ralph Luna's property in late 1950s

⁶⁰ Turner, Ellen Sue, and Thomas R. Hester. *A Field Guide to Stone Artifacts of Texas Indians*. (Texas Monthly Press, Inc., 1985), 78-152.



Figure 3.35 Point found on Rodolfo Luna's property in 1995

One of the more recent discoveries found by the Luna's was a projectile point found by Rodolfo Luna on his property during 1995 in Edinburg (Figure 3.35). The material of the point is chert, but the group distinction of the point was harder to identify. According to Tom Hester, via e-mail correspondence to Russell Skowronek:

"The point is reminiscent of 'Pontchartrain', but I have handled a bunch of those, and it does not look like it would "feel" just right. 'Kent' supposedly occurs as far south as the central coast, but they are mainly an amalgamation of crude stemmed points that fit in nothing else.⁶¹"

The contracting stemmed point (Figure 3.36) is similar, but not identical, to the Hidalgo, Kent, and Pontchartrain points. The closest distinction of point 11 is that of a Pontchartrain point (see Appendix N). These points are stemmed with a long, slender point that has straight convex lateral edges, with a body shaped with well-executed parallel flaking. Pontchartrain points may have occasional barbs along the shoulders. Kent

⁶¹ Hester, Tom. "Projectile Points Found on Luna Farm in 1995." Russell Skowronek. November 11, 2018. Email.

points are smaller in size, with asymmetrical triangular bodies and a prominent medial ridge, not quite the same appearance seen in point 11 which appears much slender.⁶² The point found by Rodolfo Luna is typically found in northeast Texas, going into Louisiana.⁶³



Figure 3.36 Rodolfo Luna's property on 17 ½ Mile Rd & Hoehn

Farming on the Luna Property

Looking for a better life, the Luna Family's story began in 1925 as Refugio Luna arrived at Los Ebanos with his parents Antonio and Dolores Luna and six siblings. Working on a farm planting cotton and corn while herding and selling goats the Lunas later would work in clearing the fields in Edinburg from 1926-1933. Through land purchases and hard work, the Lunas established their family farming business in Edinburg a century and four generations later. The Luna family are one of the last remaining original farming families in Edinburg. They have witnessed the Great Depression, Wars, natural disasters, and urbanization.

During the early twentieth century the Lower Rio Grande Valley was a land of opportunity for many families migrating from Mexico whether it be to escape the violence of the Mexican Revolution, poverty, famine, or just simply looking for a better life. The Lunas arriving in Los Ebanos took jobs at a local farm planting cotton and corn while raising and selling cabrito's or young goats on the side. Refugio Luna and his family started out like most immigrants did and that was by clearing the land of brush for the later use in farming. Life was hard back in the early 20th century for everyone, especially immigrants

⁶² Turner, Ellen Sue, Thomas R. Hester, and Richard L. McReynolds, *Stone Artifacts of Texas Indians*, Taylor Trade Publishing: New York, 2011.

⁶³ Turner, Ellen Sue, and Thomas R. Hester. *A Field Guide to Stone Artifacts of Texas Indians*. (Texas Monthly Press, Inc., 1985), 143.

and it managed to get worse by the 1930's because of Great Depression. The Lunas and other migrant families survived and managed to thrive during the downfall of the world economy by rationing and using what they had like the corn silk (thread-like fiber on the ear of corn) which they utilized by grinding up the silk and using it as flour for tortillas. During the middle of the Great Depression Antonio and Dolores Luna and their children returned to Mexico in 1933 for eight months and returned to Texas in 1934.

Years after their return Refugio Luna acquired land in Edinburg where he would plant corn, cotton, and tomatoes. The Lunas at the time did not have any kind of special equipment other than the two mules and two horses that they used to plow the fields and plant the seeds. From the 1920's – 1930's corn,⁶⁴ cotton, and tomatoes were good staple crops for the Lunas at the time, but they would spread out to other vegetables like cabbages. As times change so does farming with new crops to plant and new more efficient farming equipment is developed and made available to farmers to purchase. In 1942 the Lunas purchase their first tractor, but it was a process to get it because due to World War II farmers needed to submit an application to the government in order to purchase the tractor. With a new tractor the Lunas could farm more efficiently and make more money by planting and harvesting more crops and hauling them up to San Antonio. In 1944, with the extra money that they were making Refugio purchased the first 80 acres of land that the Luna family still lives on and farms to this day at corner of Depot and Schunior Streets. Today the equipment has gotten bigger and better, with tractors and trucks two stories high that are fully automated with touch screen controls. Some of the new equipment used by the Lunas are Combine Harvesters and Tractors with disc plows (Figure 3.38) There will always be a need for farming and equipment will continue to evolve along with the farmers and regulations.



Figure 3.37 Ralph Luna's property on 1311 N. Hoehn, now pastureland.

⁶⁴ Oral History Interview, Ralph Luna, interview by Rafael Martinez and Julio Smith, October 22, 2018, transcript



Figure 3.38 Combine Harvester (right) and (left) John Deere Tractor with a Disc Plow

There is a famous story amongst the Luna family about how Refugio purchased the 40 acres from a Mr. Polis. Ralph Luna, Refugio Lunas eldest son would help his father with the family farming and recollecting. Refugio and Ralph would later go and ask about the price for the land and Mr. Polis offered the land to the Lunas for \$20,000 and offered to clear all the trees and brush from the land so it would be ready for them to farm. Refugio accepted this offer and proclaimed to Mr. Polis that he would pay him off within a year. He just looked at the Lunas and shook his head and said if he was able to pay him in a year, then he would give him a brand-new Stetson hat. Determined to keep his word Refugio with the help of his sons and hired workers planted 15 acres of tomatoes and 25 acres of cabbages which had gone for \$200 per ton because of the government was in need of cabbages to make sauerkraut to feed the soldiers at war.

Pesticides are a big part of farming because it kills off any insects and intrusive plant life that might harm crops. The Lunas used pesticides to eliminate the Boll Weevils that ate the cotton buds and flowers. Pesticides were also used on the worms and moths like the Diamondback Moth that would eat the cabbages and tomatoes. Farming is a labor-intensive undertaking plowing, planting, irrigating, harvesting, etc. 80+ acres to work. In the beginning Refugio Luna would employ local citizens of Edinburg to plant and irrigate the cabbages. Beginning in 1946-48 Braceros who would come from Mexico to work. By the 1950's the Lunas employed 90 Braceros to work the farm for a two-month period. Out of the 90, Refugio would choose 8-9 braceros that he thought worked the best and trusted to stay year-round and got them papers. Many of those Braceros who stayed married and settled in Edinburg where they still live today.

Farmers like the Luna family produce a variety of crops including cabbages, onions, tomatoes, carrots, corn, sorghum, and cotton. Once harvested the crops were sold to packing sheds who then distributed them. The Lunas used Stevens Produce and R&R Produce in Edinburg. According to Ralph Luna, they would haul the crops like the cabbages and tomatoes to the packing shed where the buyers would jump on top of the truck and grade the quality if the crop and pay accordingly. Out of Refugio Luna's six sons, everyone helped out on the family farm. Ralph left the farm to fight in the Korean War and came back to work

with the USDA as a reporter. His duties included reporting the amount of acreage a farmer is supposed to farm for that season. Many farmers would grow too much and have to destroy those crops but were subsidized by the government for them. With the death of Refugio Luna, the land was distributed evenly amongst Ralph and his siblings.⁶⁵

Today only two Luna brothers are farming in Edinburg; Roberto Luna with his son Bobby Luna and Ramon Luna with his son Roy Luna. Roberto farms 3,500 acres in Edinburg, San Manuel, and McCook, some of it is his land and the rest he sharecrops. Ramon and the other brothers, Rodolfo and Refugio Jr. have retired and only farm their own acres. Through the years Roberto would grow watermelons, carrots, corn, grain sorghum, and watermelon, but his main crops currently are corn and grain. He stopped growing cabbages, and carrots because they take too much work to constantly irrigate them, while corn only needs to be irrigated twice.

Farming in Edinburg is decreasing, many families sell their land for retail and housing. Pesticides and the presence of large equipment can be problematic. What was once the economic mainstay of Edinburg and Hidalgo County is now fading in the memory of local citizens. Today Roberto “Bobby” Luna and Roy Luna continue the tradition initiated by Refugio Luna in the opening decades of the 20th century. After a century it is uncertain if Roy’s and Bobby’s children will go on to become farmers or work in agriculture in the future.

⁶⁵ Oral History Interview, Ralph Luna, interview by Rafael Martinez and Julio Smith, October 22, 2018, transcript
LAND OWNERSHIP Note: The first piece of land bought by the Lunas in Edinburg was in 1944, 80 acres where Roberto Luna lives today at the corner of Depot and Schunior Streets. The 2nd piece of land was bought in 1947 which was 25 acres where Ralph Luna lives today at Hoehn and Chapin Streets. The 3rd piece of land was purchased in 1949 which was 10 acres on North Schunior. The 4th piece of land was purchased in 1950 which was 40 acres on Hwy 107 & Jackson where Peter Piper and Sonic are today. The 5th piece of land bought in 1955 was 103 acres on 23rd Street and Sprague. Total of 258 acres. The 40 acres at Jackson and Hwy 107 were known as “El Cuarenta”.

Chapter Four: The Luna's Family Life

Amancio Chapa IV, Evelyn Cantu, Lorena Bryan, Melinda Cantu and Olga Moya

Introduction

The Rio Grande Valley was one of the border areas that was heavily involved in the growing demand for agricultural business in the late 1910's and into the 1920's, which allowed for a growing amount of opportunities for people. With irrigation being laid down, and the railroad system being introduced throughout the region, agriculture became a very prosperous industry in the Valley. At the same time, Mexico was having a revolution along with an outbreak of the Spanish Flu, which pushed people out of Mexico and into the Southern region of Texas. These factors allowed people to escape Mexico and come into a newly growing industry in the Valley. Agriculture has changed throughout the years but remains a central component in the Valley. Currently farming has changed due to the ever-growing urbanization and industrialization of the Valley. With these changes, farmers have had to change as well. One family that has really progressed with these changes is the Luna family, who have farming flowing through their veins. Dedication and hard work define the success of the Luna's to this day.

With the Luna family permanently settling down in the Valley in 1925, they have seen and have been a part of the changes of the Valley from its agricultural boom into the new metropolitan it is becoming. The farm united the family together through their dedication and hard work, while keeping their traditions and values. So many things can define the Luna's family, for example their dedication to the church through their donations of food and their active participation in the *kermes* throughout the years. Also, the need to increase their workload in order to finish in time for hunting season and enjoy their time together. In addition to the always-packed kitchen of Maria, as she and the girls helped make the meals for the boys. To the family tale of the Stetson hat that solidified their ownership of the farm that emphasizes the devotion and hard work they own.

When Refugio Luna purchased 40 acres of land (referred to as "El Cuarenta") at Hwy 107 and Jackson Road from Albert K. Polis Jr., he promised to have it paid off in one year. Polis thought that this was a long shot and told Refugio that if he paid off the 40 acres in a year's time, he would buy him a Stetson hat and would sign over the deed. In one year, Refugio was able to pay off the loan from Mr. Polis and he received his Stetson hat (Figure 4.1) symbolizing the hard work and dedication the Luna's continue to have to this day. In this chapter we will talk about the ways the Luna family has kept their values and traditions along with the changes of the farm.



Figure 4.1 Efren (Refugio's brother), Romulo and Refugio Luna Sr. wearing Stetson hat

Hunting

When coming back from school the Luna family patriarch, Refugio, would be waiting out in the front and he would let the boys know it was time to get ready. They would put on their old clothes and go out in the field to hunt for quail and rabbits until it was almost dark in order to bring back for the family to eat. The hunting shifted more toward deer and wild pig in the 1950s and 1960s (Figure 3.14). The areas where they would frequently hunt became infested with feral pigs after female pigs were pregnant.⁶⁶ They could have up to 6-8 piglets a litter two or three times per year and they did a lot of damage for the farmers in the surrounding areas. Like back when Inocente Garza had ridden alongside with Pancho Villa (Figure 2.2) trapping and hunting was necessary. Refugio Luna himself learned to build his parent's home about five feet up from the ground in order to trap rattlesnakes so they would not be in harm's way. When they would go to bed, pieces of corn were thrown under the bed and left there. At night, they could hear the snakes in the bottom; they would catch them and throw them into a six-foot-deep hole outside to confine them. Once a month a man would come by and jump in there to collect and buy them. The women of the family would not partake in hunting activities, but of course would help cook the meat. Men never asked the women if they wanted to go hunting. However, today the women do participate in hunting activities by choice.

⁶⁶ Appendix R Oral History interview with Roberto and Bobby Luna.

The Changes of Home life

1930's

The Luna family had their share of ups and downs, but they always did their best to provide for their children and keep them out of harm's way. During the Great Depression Ralph remembers facing little, if any, hardship because of how well this family was able to provide everything that they needed. He only remembers hearing about how there was a shortage of flour and how sugar had to be specially ordered because of high demand and limited supply. However, he does not remember seeing any impact from this or suffering in any way during this time. This goes to show how little impact the Great Depression had on the area but also how well the Lunas were able to manage their farm and money.

1940's

Chores and hunting changed for the Luna family depending on the era and type of home they had. In the 1940's, Refugio Luna built the first home for his family on their land in Edinburg. Palm leaves and reeds known as *carrizo(s)*, plastered with a mix of dirt, grass and water was used to construct what was known as their first thatch home. It was positioned right in front of a canal in their property to facilitate water access. The Luna family would use the canal to bathe and wash clothes. In the mornings their mother, Maria Luna, would throw water evenly on the floor inside their home and sweep it so there would not be dust flying around when she would be cooking. The Luna's recall it had the sleekness and capability of sliding in there with how smooth their mother would ensure to placate the surface.⁶⁷ Soon after, Refugio Luna purchased a used home to be used as a replacement in the late 40's.

Early 1950's

This second home was later moved to a portion of the land closer to the infrastructure and roads giving easier access out of the farm (Figure 4.2). Their 3rd and current home today stands in this location of the property. When this shift in home property occurred, so did the Luna family chores, until they had access to running water. The canal where they first bathed and washed clothes right behind their thatch home was no longer as near, requiring the Luna family to include in their chores to go out there and bring barrels of water back to their mother. This was used for the dishes, to wash the clothes in a tub with a washboard, and to bathe -on occasion heating the water during the cooler fall or winter season (Figure 3.17).

⁶⁷ Ibid.



Fig 4.2 Maria G. Luna and Teresa: Second home moved closer to infrastructure.

Running Water and Electricity

By the mid-1950s, a pump was first placed in the sink, with the ability to extract water from a cistern they built with cement. A motor was placed shortly after to give the whole home running water. The outhouse was done away with, as was having to get water from the canal in barrels. It was around this time that the Luna family first had electricity as well. It was a new era. The day they first enjoyed this new frontier everybody wanted to turn the lights on and off until their mother and father came over to say, “Turn that thing off!” Understanding from the beginning the light came with another bill to be responsible for, although it was approximately 5 dollars, a lot could be purchased with 5 dollars at the time.⁶⁸

Work Life

There have been various farming families studied by the CHAPS program and many, if not all of them, know one another. Some grew up knowing each other because of family ties early in life while others became connected later in life through community engagement.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

However, they all came to know one another, always being amicable and supporting their homesteads through connection and sharing of tools. With Ralph, such connections came about as a young man but also through work with the USDA as a land surveyor. He recounts such memories, both through work and through his relationships with the other farming families, fondly retains connections with both. He worked with the USDA for many years. His math skills proving useful on many occasions, earning him a promotion. Ralph says they still contact him to go in and work on occasion. He seems to sometimes find it difficult to say no.

The Luna Women

The Luna women participated in farm life differently from the experiences of the men; these roles continue to change with each succeeding generation of girls born into this family. When their parents first came to Texas to escape the difficulties that they faced living in Mexico, they each worked on the farm. That is, until their children came along, and it fell upon Maria to care for them and the duties of the house became her own. She would occasionally help on the farm in whatever way she could. Ralph recounts his mother having a knowledge of the land and being able to put her hands within the soil to tell if it was ready for planting.⁶⁹ She held sway over the planting season, it was at her word that they would begin to sow the land. They had ten children, six boys and then four girls, of which Refugio hoped would be boys until the sixth came along but it was another boy, nonetheless. Refugio named all the boys with R names while Maria, wanting to be different, named all the girls after matriarchs. While life turned out differently for these girls than what she had, she originally worked diligently on the farm, her daughters each had an immense impact. It became their role to care for things at home by helping their mother around the house and preparing meals. While the men performed much of the labor on the farm, the contribution of these girls as they became women was great because without them there would have been havoc. It fell upon them to launder, clean, and prepare meals but also to perform chores such as collecting water for such duties. Without the women on their farm these necessary things would go undone. As time passed duties began changing and some began to wonder what it would be like to work on the farm. One such person was the young Norma as she was told by her grandpa to grab a gunny sack and begin picking cotton in lieu of an education. She did not like it one bit instead choosing to take naps in the brush and having tea with her chicken friends. While her Aunt Janie has continued the role of her mother in cooking meals for the family, but her sister insists that the men now must put their dirty dishes away themselves. Things have also changed regarding hunting. While it used to be only the men that hunted, some of the girls from the most recent generation now go too.

⁶⁹ Appendix T - Oral History Interview Ralph Luna, Eloisa Luna, Janie Navarro, and Norma Rydl, Oct 22, 2018

School and Extracurricular Activities

Education

Most of the Luna's attended parochial school, where they wore uniforms and their educators were nuns. Ralph Luna emphasized the importance of education and wanted his children to get a feel for the public-school system. The public-school system is very different in comparison to parochial school. The difference in the systems as well, as uniforms are enforced, yet in public school the dress code is more lenient.

Math

Ralph is a very dedicated and passionate son that remembers his father fondly recalling moments when he would sit him down to study. Ralph recalls his father going over English words with him because he wanted to be sure his children could speak this language early in life. However, language was not all that they would study. As Ralph continued his school attendance, he came to realize the value of math. It became apparent to him, as he worked on the farm, how beneficial knowing mathematics would be, so he made the effort to learn it quickly. As his skill increased, he began taking on more work on the farm calculating weight of the produce and how much it would go for on the market. He loved being able to provide a necessary job on the farm and was quite an asset.

Track

Understanding the importance of the family bills led not only to most of the Luna members having to learn how to pick cotton from a very young age, but it also became a priority above all else. This was done in an effort to contribute as much money as possible. In many mornings that the Luna children would hurry to rise and milk the cows, feed the pigs and rest of the farm animals, sometimes they would miss the school bus. On this occasion there was two options, run 4 miles to get to school or stay behind and change out of school clothes to get ready for a full day of farm work. One of Refugio's son's, Roberto Luna, often chose the four-mile run, arriving just in time with the school bus right before school started. His school coaches ended up taking notice and hoped to enlist him in the school's track team, but his father, Refugio let them know his priority was for his son to learn how to work, to be able to run a farm on his own one day and be able to contribute to the farm.

Dating, School Dances and 50 cent Hairdos

In High School the Luna girls were permitted to attend the school prom. Music and dancing filled the room, the young women along with their dates would stand and pose for a

photo commemorating a night that would be part of a treasured memory later in life. Spending only 50 cents in Reynosa, Mexico to get their iconic updos.⁷⁰ An updo that nowadays would cost the average person at minimum \$40 (Figure 4.3). The Luna girls were of course allowed to go to the dances with a date on the condition of course that their mother would naturally chaperone, and the girls would be back at the car by 10:30pm.⁷¹ However, chaperoning was not just exclusive to school dances; dates to the movies were often group event with a parent in tow. That being the norm of the time though it hardly seemed like an issue. The young men who took the girls out to the dances respected the rule of having a chaperone, this applied to movie dates as well. With family being such an important thing for the Luna's it is something that is remembered fondly. Those are memories shared with loved ones.



Figure 4.3 Maria Juanita Luna and Mario Navarro at Edinburg High School Senior Prom in May 1967.

⁷⁰ Appendix V – Oral History Interview, Ralph Luna, Maria Juanita Luna Navarro, Maria Dolores Luna Vega, Norma Luna Rydl, and Teresa Luna Medrano, page 27.

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 26.

Family Traditions

Softball

Later, Roberto was able to find family tradition and time for extracurricular activities such as softball in addition to leading the farm. He recalls the day he was enlisted for the team on a day he and his wife and son went over for some burgers to a friend's small business called Spotburgers. His friend talked to him about being in the middle of putting together a small league of 25 yrs. old players and up (Roberto & Bobby Luna Interview, 2018). He was able to play softball with several of the Luna brothers and brought along his son, therefore, making the sport very much a new family tradition for years to come (Figure 4.4). Not all the Luna brothers got to play all the time due to varying duties in the farm. However, the farm was still central in the Luna boys' heart.



Figure 4.4 Softball picture with Luna brothers

Birthdays

Although the time made for school-related extracurricular activities was scarce, they always made sure to find time to celebrate their family in times of holidays or birthdays. Their grandfather on their mother's side, Inocente Garza, came to live with them after his wife passed away and his vision began to weaken. He made sure to remember the date of everybody's birthday, wake them up at 6 o'clock in the morning to play and sing happy birthday songs for them on the accordion (Figure 4.5). Later everyone celebrated with a cake to mark the day. The Luna's would host big *comidas* and BBQs for birthdays. The girls of the families never had *quinceñeras*. The reason being that quinceñeras were a big tradition. The comidas would consist of the family and closest friends, they would have conjuntos performed as well.

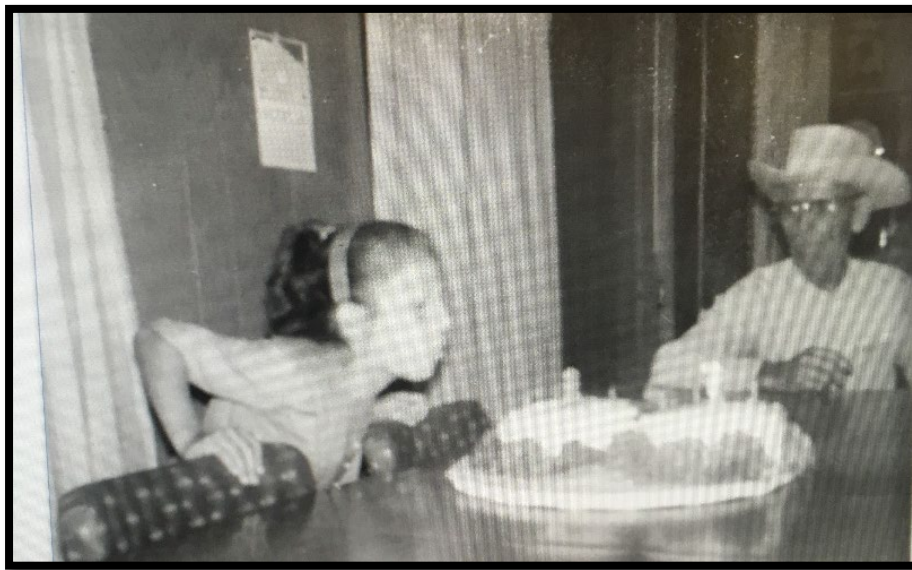


Figure 4.5 Cecilia Luna and her Grandfather Antonio Luna Sr. May 1962

Holidays

Holidays are a special time of year. The spirit of thankfulness and blessings fill the air, and nothing brings families closer than celebrating the holidays. Christmas to be exact was a big part of the Luna family household. *Buñuelos* and *tamales* were ready to be shared with all the family. The excitement of presents and of course, Christmas mass was to be expected. Though unlike the common tradition nowadays using a normal pine tree as a center for decoration, the Luna's would use a large ebony or cedar tree branch and anchor it in a bucket filled with rocks and soil.⁷² The good spirit and cheer were not just for family, kindness was given to neighbors and close friends as well. Cecilia the youngest of the Luna girls recalls also showing the neighbor family who did not have much for Christmas, how to

⁷² Ibid, p. 28.

set up and decorate their Christmas tree with the handmade paper links. Everyone would receive one gift each.

Heirlooms

Heirlooms can mean so much to one person because they hold great sentimental value. Sometimes it is not really what the object is, but the meaning behind it. It is important to understand the meaning behind each item that is passed down, it gives us an insight on what means the most to an individual. The Luna's have several heirlooms, of which some belong to Norma Luna Rydl, and Maria Juanita Luna Navarro. Heirlooms include a butter churner, and a wood portrait of her father Ralph in his military uniform (Figure 4.6 and 4.7). The frame was 65 years old as it was made when Ralph went to the Korean War. The frame is hand carved, and the image of Ralph is hand painted. Maria Juanita Luna Navarro obtains an 18-carat gold medallion of the Virgen de Guadalupe that was given to her by her mother Maria in 1990. Juanita Luna still wears the medallion (Figure 4.8).



Fig 4.6 Butter churner Norma now owns, used when children to make homemade butter



Fig 4.7 Hand painted and carved image of Ralph Luna in his military uniform, Korean War.



Fig 4.8: 18 carat gold medallions passed down to Maria Juanita Luna Navarro from her mother in 1990

Religious Values

The Luna family are members of the Roman Catholic Church. They were raised no other way. They attended Sacred Heart Church. They visit the basilica in San Juan, Texas. The Luna's find religion is calming and tranquil. The family prays every day and believes in keeping faith when in times of trouble, and when giving thanks for life. The Luna's are extremely devoted to their religion, and to their church. Every year a portion of the crops harvested by the Luna's would be given to the church as donation as well as a cow held for auction at the Kermes. The family would look forward to attending the Kermes each year that was held by the church, they saw it as more of a social where you had the chance to see everyone from town. In the past, individuals would dress formally and attend Mass every Sunday. Today, people are seen wearing whatever they please and have many options to attend Mass. To this day, the Luna's are active in their church. Everyone has been baptized, completed communion, and confirmation, and believe in getting married through the church. They are strong believers in prayer, the Luna's believe their religious values will be passed down to generation to generation as their faith is so strong, and it unites the family.

After Church Traditions and Donations

Every Sunday the Luna family would rise and attend a Roman Catholic Church called Sacred Heart. After church, their grandfather Inocente, would send them to buy 2 bags of bread from the bakery for 50 cents or a dollar. Maria Luna would then make hot chocolate or Kool aid. The relationship the Luna family held with the church was very much about the unity of having a meal together, inviting the priest over on a Saturday or Sunday to enjoy a special, traditional meal, *cabrito*, a dish made of young goat.⁷³ The priest, known as Father Moses, enjoyed it so much he would even ask the Luna family, on occasion over the podium, if they planned to cook one soon. The Luna family would warmly respond a near date to invite him to and Father Moses would often walk the fields with Refugio Luna to bless them. Values were set in the table, their grandfather, Inocente was losing his sight and sometimes he would not be able to see what was where on his plate. Most of the time he ended up mixing his food, yet he would never complain and always finished his plate. The forever-lasting principle of having a connection with the land, was also passed down by him, having a little corner of his own on the Luna property to harvest watermelon, corn, green beans and pumpkins. He tended his crops until the day he could no longer see.

⁷³ Appendix P Oral History Interview, Roberto and Bobby Luna.

Early every summer, around the fourth of July, the Luna family would begin picking cotton so they would be the first to set the first bale of cotton in the Valley. This earned them a special price for the early harvest which increased their profit. At the end of their early harvest, Refugio Luna would encourage the church to bring as many people as possible to pick all they could so the church would likewise benefit and make profit off the cotton. These events became a wide community effort, bringing out 50 to 100 people with their babies and families to pick as much cotton for the church as possible (Figure 4.9). The kids would like it because there was a truck they would call “*El Raspero*” (The Snow Cone Man) who would sell iced treats, coke, bread and candies for about a penny or two.



Fig 4.9 Nuns and community picking cotton for Sacred Heart donation summer of 1965

Cooking with The Lunas

During many of these traditional festivities the Luna family had, they would make sure to collect what they could to use for the kitchen. Every Christmas and New Years the family was known to kill a pig for each occasion, eating all the meat when no refrigeration was yet available and save the lard on a 5-gallon drum to use for a variety of cooking later. The Luna's would make food in bulk for anyone who wanted to stop by, the family, and for those working on the farm. Growing up, the ladies would cook breakfast, lunch, and dinner. They would make homemade butter with an original butter churner. The Luna's would also use a traditional *molcajete* to grind up spices. A dish that is being passed down through the Luna's is the traditional stuffing, for Thanksgiving dinner they baked a whole chicken stuffed with potatoes, tomatoes and onions. Traditions are believed to reflect how one is

raised, and the Luna family is one that is overflowing with tradition as well as a strong belief in family. Which stems from their childhood and is being passed down to the newer generations. Because above all, family came first to the Lunas. Dolores Luna recalls back to when she was already married wanting to continue her mother's traditions and her love for cooking. She would see pumpkins at the grocery store and suggested to her mother that she and her mother should make *empanadas*. Once done Dolores and her mother Maria would make their rounds and deliver the sweets to her brothers, sisters and their families. It was a nice gesture, but it also gave Maria the opportunity to visit her children. Doing so put her in a happy disposition, which in turn was a nice comfort to Dolores as well (Appendix W).

Entertainment and Town Life

These useful cooking tools, such as lard, were useful because there weren't many options for food other than eating at home. Nonetheless, one of the most known places for eating out growing up was a bakery in Edinburg called El Fenix, and a restaurant called Covered Wagon. Covered Wagon was known for their all-you-can-eat chicken special of only a dollar in McAllen, as soon as you would finish your basket you could ask for a refill. Robert's Drive Inn was also known to be one of the main places to pick up food in town, like today's Sonic, where food is delivered to the client's vehicle. They would serve cokes, root beer floats, fried chicken, hamburgers and french fries. When the Luna family was growing up and helped with the cotton picking, they would contribute their earnings to the family. Nonetheless they would receive about 25 cents to go to the movies Saturday and Sunday which covered the purchase of a ticket, a bag of popcorn, and a Coke at the Citrus Theater on the Edinburg Plaza. Western movies such as Roy Rogers and Hopalong Cassidy were some of the stars on the big screen when the Lunas were growing up.⁷⁴

At home, music was enjoyed mainly in Spanish, and in school, Elvis Presley was one of the main English favorites that was heard. Some of the main newspapers at the time started with the Edinburg Daily Review and later a bigger newspaper The Monitor. These were dominant ways to keep up with what was going on with the community.

Town Crime Stories and Haunted Places

Murder by Hands of a Priest

The killing of Irene Garza by a priest was a story that shook the community in the 1960s and is a well-remembered story today. For a priest to have committed the crime was unheard of in a town where devotion to the church was a main part of the community's lives. It was difficult to believe and hard to prove, which gave the priest leverage to run off and start a new life where he married and had a family. It was not until politics stepped in by the

⁷⁴ Ibid.

District Attorney who was running for election during current times, that he promised he would bring the priest back to face his crime.

The Drinking Fieldworker

It was believed by the Luna family a man that worked their farms, had not completely left their farm after passing in a space he lived in their garage area. He was known to drink heavily, often replacing rubbing alcohol for other liquors, feeling they would not help him. With time, he began getting sicker and passed away after a week of his worsened state. After he passed away whenever one was walking late at night in this area or when it was raining, the hairs in ones back would start to rise until completely away from this area. After some time, a future worker was cleaning the garage close to this space and when he looked that way, he saw somebody walking out there. He made sure to first ask the Luna family if they were aware there was a man in there, but after checking all three rooms, there was nothing. This worker couldn't understand where the man he saw could have gone insisting he saw a man there, which is when they let him know about the death of the drinking worker. The worker went to Rio Bravo as he used to live out there and came back with several bottles of holy water accompanied with his wife. At night, she kneeled to say prayers while the place was showered with holy water. The sensation of hair rising when walking past this area was not felt again.⁷⁵

The Glowing Lantern and Screaming Women of the Woods

Several times after coming home late at night from visiting a Luna brother that lived out in the direction where their first thatch home used to be by the canal, a glowing lantern could be seen hovering behind a pipe, as if being walked by someone. Eventually it would drift off inside the woods to disappear. By several accounts over time from the Luna family and workers of the farm, this glowing lantern would be sighted over the same area, walking over to the woods to disappear. Some believed this meant there might be gold out there. But it was also wondered through recalling of past stories their father Refugio Luna and uncles used to tell if it might not be someone's spirit. These stories recalled how in some of the far-out ranches in Mexico sometimes a fight was known to break out where someone got stabbed or killed. There was a story of two girls who got in a fight because they were in love with the same guy, it was known they both killed themselves out in the woods where screams could later be heard at night. Stories such as these made some wonder if the glowing lantern may be something else other than gold being in the area.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Health

Simpler times, when pharmacies and doctors were in the same building, provided patients the care needed all in one place. Midwives and delivery rooms wouldn't charge anything vastly different for their services during the time when the Luna family grew up in Edinburg. The patient would be addressed first, collecting their information or means of payment afterward. All the male sons of Refugio Luna born first in the family, were delivered at home by midwives. Later the females were delivered in hospital settings, since by then the development of local hospitals became accessible. Grandview Hospital in Edinburg, which is no longer in use, was one hospital the family members recall using in their early life. When it came to things such as vaccines and shots, they were administered to the kids while they were in school. They received all kinds of vaccinations such as the ones for polio, TB, mumps, and smallpox.⁷⁷

Home Remedies

Home remedies were always used first when dealing with a common cold, or flu, leaving hospitals only for more urgent circumstances. Maria Luna and her father Inocente Garza were some of the main sources for cooking up home remedies such as teas for stomach aches, using specific leaves for specific ailments. The Luna's had many herbs for food and for teas. They would boil the hairs of the corn as a tea to cure bladder infections. Buttermilk was ingested when acid reflux was troubling and causing discomfort. The Luna's mother was a primary source of cures for ailments before the town doctor would be called for the more severe cases, or if things were to be escalated to being hospital severe. Luckily nothing ever got that truly severe in their household. Even their father would help when the children suffered from non-traditional illnesses such as *susto*. Dolores recalls her father hiding behind the doorway and surprising them with alcohol to rid them of *susto*.⁷⁸ Cornstarch was also used when the children would break out in rashes as well as on babies instead of talcum powder. Mentholatum and oil was used to rub out knots and increase blood flow when someone was feeling sickly.⁷⁹ When ingesting certain teas that would make you sweat, bathing was out of the question till the fevers were completely sweated out. Naturally sponge baths were the alternative. Maria Luna was a firm believer in not sharing drinks, even among each other. This belief comes from when Maria was a child growing up and the influenza illness was killing off many families. Her parents would help dig graves for those who had passed, and she witnessed her mother helping the families carry their dead out of their homes. Because of what she witnessed in her childhood; Maria was always diligent to ensure her family was healthy. In all, the Luna children were healthy, given that they were eating food from the land and not ingesting anything that had preservatives or anything that was not provided from the farm. As well as the magic of a mother's care.

⁷⁷ Appendix V.

⁷⁸ Appendix, V, p. 29.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 31.

Across Borders for Medicine

Even though Refugio Luna was familiar with the doctors practicing in the area he would occasionally go to Mexico for specific medicine. Later, one of his son's, Roberto Luna, would frequent this trip across the border for medicine. Since his wife was a nurse and liked to keep vaccines well stocked on the occasion anyone fell sick in her immediate family. However, these trips to gather medicine from Mexico have stopped. They cite higher violence and crime rates as the reason for this change.⁸⁰

Injuries

Although most serious injuries that have happened in the farm have been on more recent occasions, they still have quite a distance to travel in order to get to the nearest hospital. Roberto Luna has had two different incidents where he smashed and irreversibly cut off the tips of two different fingers with machinery and while handling livestock. He had to drive 30 miles to reach the nearest hospital for one of the incidents, and 55 miles for the other. On an earlier occasion, a Luna brother similarly smashed a hand when a strong gust of wind slammed the tractor's door he was climbing out of, only to be discovered later inside the house, trying to take care of his wound.⁸¹ He was driven to the hospital where stitches had to be administered without anesthesia in the 1970's. After such incidents, the Luna family members agree it is important to work with others so if a similar situation arises, someone can always help take the injured as quickly as possible to the nearest hospital.

Deaths in the Family

When reflecting on the various injuries that have occurred, it is simply wished by members of the Luna family that on their last day, they are not in a situation where they may not be able to stop a piece of machinery or vehicle being driven. Such as the case with their father Refugio Luna on the day of May 6, 1965 (Appendix X). A cement truck was waiting for a light to turn green, when Refugio Luna suffered a heart attack and collided with a cement truck from behind. Nobody else was injured from the accident. A death of one of the Luna brothers is recalled being just as sudden. When in line to get a BBQ plate at one of their homes, Lito Luna had just gotten done joking around with those in front of line to leave some for him when he fell to the floor, dying instantly. Although very much missed and unexpected, the Luna members are grateful they did not have to suffer in pain for an extended period and that it was over suddenly.

⁸⁰ Appendix P, Oral History Interview Roberto and Bobby Luna.

⁸¹ Ibid.

After Life

The majority of the Luna's are buried at Valley Memorial cemetery. They have uncles, several cousins, and Luna parents are buried there (Fig 4.10 & 4.11). Other family members are buried at Hillcrest cemetery. The Luna's show us how much family really does mean to them.



Fig 4.10 Antonio Luna Sr. Headstone



Fig 4.11 Luna headstones, right to left, Luna family member, Refugio Luna, Maria Luna

Conclusion

As the Lower Rio Grande Valley has developed into a more urban/metropolitan area, the Luna family has managed to keep their roots on the farm. However, as the new generations of Lunas come in, the farm has begun to shift in importance. Once the farm was distributed amongst the brothers and sisters, they did as they pleased with their land. Some sold their portion while others kept their land to this day. Like Ramon, who still has his pasture and helps on the farm, but as technology has come into their life the third generation of Luna have become the more active family members in the maintenance of the farm (Figure 4.12 & 4.13).



Figure 4.12 (left) Roberto and son Bobby Luna Fall Harvest 2018

Some of the sons have continued their father's legacy in keeping the farm as a central part of their lives. Roy Luna gave an example of this due to him going partially to college, getting a job with the government and still staying to assist on the farm. Life on the farm has been, and continues to be, central in most of the Luna's life to this day. The farm is their home and work, and their efforts to keep it are apparent when speaking to them. However, the third generation of Lunas have given their children the freedom to choose to work on the farm, something that was not available to the second generation. Nonetheless, with the move to an urban Lower Rio Grande Valley and the freedom given to the newer generations, the Luna's heart will always remain on the farm. The stories and experiences they shared will always be deeply rooted into their lives as each year passes and new Luna's are born (Figure 4.14).



Fig 4.13 Some of the Luna Family Fall 2018 Bobby Luna, Norma Luna Rydl, Roberto Luna, Ralph Luna, Juanita Luna Navarro and Rolando Luna

Chapter Five: Bracero Program, Race and Labor Relation

Stephanie Luna, Sandra Gonzalez and Dayana Garza

Segregation

Ralph Luna remembers segregation of public schools in the Rio Grande Valley, claiming a clear distinction between the “Anglo” schools and the “Latino” schools. “The Anglos had their separate school... They had all the luxuries. They had swings ... where they could play. And our playground was all rocks and thorns... I would see them and it made me wish I was in the other school with the swing”⁸².

According to an article on segregation in Texas by De Leon, “in the early twentieth century, blacks and Mexican schools faced lamentable conditions endemic in an antiquated educational system... [these schools] often suffered from inadequate financing, poor educational facilities, and racist curriculum.” The article goes on to say that Hispanic students “were segregated because some whites thought them ‘dirty’ and because some white employers desired an uneducated, inexpensive labor pool.”⁸³

Ralph Luna also notes even further segregation between African Americans and Mexican Americans. In the personal interview cited above, he states, “We did know that the colored people were separated, there were no African Americans in our class at that time. They didn’t come until way back in the 1960s the first African Americans, started... getting integrated...into the school.”⁸⁴ In an article by Maria Herrera-Sobek, she also details the segregation between black and Mexicans: “Anglo Americans lived on one side of town, and Latin Americans and African Americans lived on the other side, in separate sections”.⁸⁵

These divisions also translated into matters of death. Hillcrest Cemetery in northeast Edinburg was segregated. The classroom-size patch of land northwest of the cemetery’s main grounds was dedicated to only African American people. It was often referred to as the “cabbage patch”. It was not until 1993 that it received the name “Restlawn Cemetery”. This cemetery was often overlooked and uncared for, tended to for years only by a man named Lewis C. Callis. In 2013, University of Texas Pan American students began a project to restore it. Members from the community have also continued traditions of celebrating the African American community by visiting the cemetery on Juneteenth.⁸⁶ Brown vs. Board of

⁸² Ralph Luna. Interviewed by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. Audio.

⁸³ *Handbook of Texas Online*, Arnoldo De León and Robert A. Calvert, "SEGREGATION," accessed December 09, 2018, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/pks01>.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Herrera-Sobek, María. "Gloria Anzaldúa: Place, Race, Language, and Sexuality in the Magic Valley." *PMLA* 121, no. 1 (2006): 266-71. <http://www.jstor.org.ezhost.utrgv.edu:2048/stable/25486304>.

⁸⁶ “Edinburg Cemetery Celebrating Anniversary Place of Pride for African-American Community” *KRGV*, July 6 2017. <http://www.krgv.com/story/35825329/edinburg-cemetery-celebrating-anniversary-place-of-pride-for-african-american-community>

Education passed in 1954, ending segregation in schools throughout the United States. However, Texas legislators resisted the Supreme Court decision by signing a document called the Southern Manifesto.⁸⁷ This document called the landmark decision “an abuse of power” and commended states that would “resist forced integration by any lawful means.”⁸⁸

Who Will Win?

In the same personal interview as above, Ralph tells a story of an Anglo high school student and a Latin student both running for senior class president. Ralph stated that the Anglo student was very popular and the son of a teacher at the school. The Latin American valedictorian was the underdog. To everyone’s surprise, this Latin American student won the presidency. Ralph states: “...I’ll never forget that... because the teachers were all Anglos. And they couldn’t believe it. That a Latin was gonna get [the presidency]”. This story from Ralph’s childhood depicts the actual racist ideologies that were prevalent in the Rio Grande Valley schools during this time. When asked if he felt people were treated unfairly because of the color of their skin, even after telling us this story, Ralph responded, “no”. While the Luna family directly experienced racism in various forms, they do not feel as if it affected them negatively.

No Spanish Allowed

Ralph Luna went on to speak about the use of Spanish language in schools, telling of how it was forbidden to speak his first language in the classroom. “People wanted you to speak English, you spoke English”, adding that the “students would get punished” if they were caught speaking Spanish.⁸⁹ They wanted you to learn English in order for you to succeed. Although Norma and Ralph were both directly affected by this no Spanish rule, they both express it was not a serious issue to them. Norma states, “...we never felt like we were discriminated [against]”. Ralph goes on to say his teachers treated him real “nice”.

Identity

The categories which Latin-Americans have ethnically and racially identified with, and how the United States government has identified them both have changed over time based on social and political circumstances. For example, according to the article by Gratton and Merchant, the 1930 United States Census listed “Mexican” as a race category, citing that the issue of adding this new term came “as an unwelcome surprise, sprung on them by the sudden arrival of large numbers of Latin immigrants”.⁹⁰ In 1940, the Mexican category

⁸⁷ Ramirez, Fernando. "Historic Photos Show Segregated Life in Jim Crow Texas." Houston Chronicle. May 17, 2018. Accessed November 29, 2018. <https://www.chron.com/news/houston-zzztexas/houston/article/Historical-photos-show-segregated-life-in-Houston-11150648.php#photo-12914867>.

⁸⁸ “Southern Manifesto” http://alvaradohistory.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/4SouthernManifesto.1134251.pdf

⁸⁹ Luna, Ralph. Interviewed by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. Audio.

⁹⁰ Gratton, Brian, and Emily Klancher Merchant. "La Raza: Mexicans in the United States Census." *Journal of Policy History* 28, no. 04 (2016): 537-67. doi:10.1017/s0898030616000257.

was removed after protest from the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). This organization argued that checking the Mexican box could lead to less opportunities and resources for Mexican Americans, arguing that Mexican Americans were simply just American. The Bureau then concluded that “Mexicans are to be regarded as white unless definitely of Indian or other nonwhite race”.⁹¹

The article continues that “...the ‘Hispanic’ identifier was created, largely because persons of Mexican origin in the United States were able to construct their own history”.⁹² Gratton and Merchant note that in current times, many “Latin Americans... see themselves as ‘some other race’ other than white”, with the Bureau contemplating restructuring the race and Hispanic origin questions once more for the census year 2020.⁹³ When asked how Ralph Luna racially identifies, he replies, “Latin-American. Well, I’m considered an American, we were born here. My parents came from Mexico, but I consider myself an American.” Norma identifies herself as Hispanic.⁹⁴ The responses of these two generations of Luna family members are evidence of how racial and ethnic identity is changed throughout history within the context of social, economic, and political circumstances.

Bracero Program

The Bracero Program began during the early years of World War II as a temporary war-related measure to supply farmworkers along the southern border of the United States.⁹⁵ On August 4, 1942, the Mexican Farm Labor Program Agreement with Mexico was signed. The following program was managed by several government agencies as the agreement pertained to different aspects that had to be run by specific agencies. One of these agencies being the Department of Agriculture. The agreements of the program consisted of employers being able to guarantee a minimum wage of thirty cents an hour and humane treatment for their workers, consisting of homing or some sort of shelter, food, and sanitation⁹⁶ (Figure 5.1 and 5.2).

Koestler continues to write that farmers in Texas decided not to participate in this program for the first five years of it, and as a result, in 1943, Texas growers lobbied in Washington through the American Farm Bureau Federation. Texas growers wanted to weaken the terms of the agreement due to suspicion that the accord would eventually apply to seasonal workers in other areas, in addition to domestic service and other related fields of temporary employment. While Texas farmers chose to not participate in the Bracero program, they began to hire farm workers from Mexico, which will be one of the topics

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Luna, Ralph. Interviewed by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. Audio.

⁹⁵ Koestler, Fred. Bracero Program. Texas State Historical Association <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/omb01>

⁹⁶ Ibid.



Figure 5.1 Bracero Quarters on the Luna Farm property



Figure 5.1 & 5.2
The Bracero's former quarters on the Luna family farm

discussed later on in this chapter. These workers entering the United States illegally received the title of “wetbacks”⁹⁷ as they made their way into the United States by crossing the Rio Grande.

In the 1950s, it was estimated that the United States imported 300,000 Mexican workers annually. This supply of labor was incentive for Texas’ full participation in the program and soon enough, by the end of the 1950s, Texas received large numbers of Braceros. The majority of the workers recruited complied with the requirements of the agreement by which they were hired; however, some remained in the United States illegally once their work time expired. Accounts of such events were provided by members of the Luna family, as they became aware that some of their ex-workers stayed in the United States after their work time expired, making families and permanently residing in the country.

Due to this newfound issue, the Immigration and Naturalization Service began “Operation Wetback”. The sole purpose of this operation was the roundup of unauthorized Mexican workers, particularly, in Texas and California. These roundups resulted in the repatriation of unauthorized Mexican workers back to their native country. By the middle of the 1950s, the INS repatriations unauthorized Mexican workers reached 3.8 million.⁹⁸ After conducting interviews with several members of the Luna family, the students in the CHAPS program were able to retrieve some information relating to the Bracero Program and how it affected the family as a whole. Braceros were brought to the Luna farm during the 1950s and 1960s, their jobs consisting of picking up harvests, cleaning fields and (the few that knew how to) would work with irrigation, as Ramon Luna recalls, “they’d pick cotton, tomatoes and they’d clean the fields...some of them would know how to irrigate.”⁹⁹

An estimate of 90 braceros worked in the Luna farm. However, not all of them lived on the farm. Only the 20 closest braceros who stayed year-round lived in a concrete house that was provided by Refugio Luna, who hired a Mexican worker to build it in hopes to add a second floor to it. As mentioned by Rafael Luna in one of the interviews conducted, eight to nine braceros would be kept in the Luna farm to work year-round: “...he would keep about 8 or 9 to work all year round so he would... get them papers to come and he would renew them every 6 months...he picked the ones that knew how to work... a lot of them stayed here, married here, and now they have families well educated...their parents use to be braceros.”¹⁰⁰

The number of braceros also varied with the seasons. For example, during the winter, less braceros would stay. According to Rafael Luna, four workers would stay, specifically

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Luna, Ramon. Interviewed by Dayana Garza. Audio.

¹⁰⁰ Luna, Ramon. Interviewed by Rafael Martinez. Audio.



Figure 5.3 Students and the Luna family on a tour of the Bracero's living quarters

the ones who knew how to irrigate and clean the weed around the carrots. These workers would stay for three to four months (Figure 5.3).

As mentioned before, the requirements for employers under the Bracero Program included the humane treatment for their workers, this consisting of homing or some sort of shelter, food and sanitation, all of this was provided to all the workers in the Luna farm. The following pictures were taken by CHAPS students after visiting one of the Luna properties and the place where the braceros were housed. In total, the room consisted of four small rooms and a large area. It was mentioned several times by interviewees that a kitchen was



Figure 5.4 inside the stove in Bracero's living quarters

also provided inside the house and there was still a stove in the house when we visited the site (figure 5.4).

In addition to braceros, it was also mentioned by several Luna family members that Mexican workers outside of the Bracero Program were hired by Refugio Luna. As recalled by Ralph Luna, “My dad had the privilege that he would get people he knew had worked with us before without papers. They would come work for us in the summer and pick cotton then they would go back. They stayed here for about two months. My dad would get their names and they would meet in Monterrey and somehow dad knew how to get them all in”.

¹⁰¹

Roberto Luna also mentioned workers from Mexico immigrating into the United States and there being no problem when it came to facing Border Patrol, “...then they started bringing some families over but at that time...the border patrol left them... they let you work more because it wasn’t so bad like right now”.¹⁰² The number of workers varied depending on the seasons, and every group of workers that was brought in had different tasks. In some cases, some workers had to be taught their tasks. As Ramon Luna recalls, some workers did not know how to pick cotton but were taught this skill with the Luna family. In addition to this, other skilled workers brought their own knowledge of irrigation. The Braceros impacted the Luna farm’s day to day logistics, but their contributions on the farm also impacted their own lives, as they worked in a foreign country and made ties to the land and the people.



Figure 5.5 Roberto Luna with hand-held cotton scale

¹⁰¹ Luna, Ralph. Interviewed by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. Audio.

¹⁰² Luna, Roberto. Interviewed by Lynn Rodriguez. Audio.

In a personal interview, Ralph Luna had this to say about Bracero life outside of their work: “On Saturdays-- they picked cotton up until half day...then Sunday they would be off. They would go to town-- to go eat hamburgers, go to the movies. And they were looking forward to that day. And we had people who would come in a truck and they had sodas and with ice and had sweet bread”.¹⁰³ In the same interview, Ralph Luna mentions some of the Braceros marrying girls from the town: “...Did you know that I know several [Braceros] that stayed over and married girls from here? Now their kids-- some are dentists some are doctors. They are doing very well. Because they were Braceros and married girls from here. They were young... they bought their house and now they have real nice homes”.¹⁰⁴

Hiring Practices

In another interview, when asked if his father would hire undocumented workers, he replied, “We all did... my dad would hire them. He would not discriminate”.¹⁰⁵ Ralph goes on to say the following about hiring workers: “Sometimes, people would ask me ‘if you see somebody passing by, if they wanna work let me know’, so I’d tell my neighbor-- ‘I have two people that came over, do you want them?’”¹⁰⁶ In 1986, however, hiring undocumented workers became punishable by United States law. The Immigration Reform and Control Act not only legalized undocumented workers who arrived prior to January 1982 but also put forth “sanctions for employers who knowingly [illegally] hire undocumented workers”.

Melon Strike 1966

According to the melon strike proclamation passed by the City of Edinburg, “hundreds of men, women, and children harvesting cantaloupes in Rio Grande City and Starr County organized with the United Farm Workers and demanded growers raise wages from 40 cents to \$1.25 an hour”¹⁰⁷. They walked out of their work and picketed the fields, and proceeded to march 400 miles to Austin. This strike continued until 1967, and as a result, a Texas minimum wage law passed in legislature in the year 1970. While the Luna family did not participate in the melon strikes, Ralph remembers the strikes: “I remember...the owners were getting upset with the strikers and they were protesting... the farmers told people to...get out... they said they wanted more money, higher wages. I remember people from town would... get in the protests. Sometimes, they were a whole bunch.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ Luna, Ralph. Interviewed by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. Audio.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Luna, Ralph. Interviewed by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. Audio.

¹⁰⁷ Edinburg Politics. "United Farmworkers Hosts 50th Anniversary Celebration of 1966 Melon Strike by Texas Farmworkers." Titans of the Texas Legislature. August 26, 2016. Accessed December 10, 2018. <https://edinburgpolitics.com/2016/08/25/utrgv-to-serve-site-melon-strike-texas-farmworkers/>.

¹⁰⁸ Luna, Ralph. Interviewed by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. Audio.

Chapter Six: Service: The United States Army and Department of Agriculture

Abigail Espinoza and Fernan Rojas

The Korean War

The Korean War was a conflict between the United States allied with South Korea and fought against North Korea. The war officially began on June 25, 1950 when soldiers from the North Korean army moved south of the 38th parallel line that separated both countries. The war turned out to be a brutal and bloody one that would eventually lead to a stalemate. Fear over larger Communist powers becoming involved and having the war turn into a World War was apparent. The opposing sides signed a treaty in July of 1953 and the war officially ended on July 27, 1953.

Ralph Luna the Draft Letter

Ralph Luna was living in Edinburg when he received a letter from the government saying he was drafted into the United States Army to serve in the Korean conflict. Shortly after, his father got Ralph a deferment letter stating that he was the oldest working on the farm and was also going to school at the time. The deferment had to be renewed every six months but by then, his younger brother, Romulo “Lito” Luna was also sent a letter conscripting his service in the United States military. Ralph Luna was unsettled by the fact that if he renewed his deferment letter, his little brother would end up going into the military while he stayed at home. Ralph chose to not renew the deferment and to carry out his obligation of being drafted so that his younger brother would not have to do so. Ralph Luna stated, “it’s not fair that my brother was going to be drafted, and I would rather go and let my brother stay. I would not feel right for me to stay and him to go so I made that decision.”¹⁰⁹ Ralph’s feelings toward having to go were not complicated to him. There was no initial resentment towards it, due to the fact that he knew that if he did not go, his brother would have to; so, he postponed his wedding and prepared himself to leave his home and the Rio Grande Valley.

Boot Camp

Ralph Luna boarded a bus in December 1952 with a little over fifty people and made their way to San Antonio. On the bus, there were mainly other Hispanic males that accompanied him. In San Antonio, they went through their in-processing and began their medical checks to make sure they were fit for service in the military. It was in San Antonio where Ralph was separated from the initial group he departed with and boarded with a new group heading to Kentucky. When Ralph arrived in Kentucky, it was wintertime and the

¹⁰⁹ Luna, Ralph “Oral Interview with Ralph Luna, Janie Luna Navarro, Eloisa Luna, and Norma Riddle.” Interview by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. October 19, 2018.

snow had already accumulated on the ground. This would be the first time that Ralph would see snow so he could not help himself but to play in it. Ralph states, “When I got there, I stayed outside playing with the snow and after an hour I was freezing.”¹¹⁰ Ralph was shown his bunk and ended up crawling inside it and covering up to try and raise his body temperature again. “After that, when I would see snow, I stayed away from it.”¹¹¹ The wintertime proved to be troublesome for Ralph. During their ruck marches, Ralph noticed that their canteens would freeze over and they would have to wait for them to melt in order to be able to drink water. He also had to feed coals to the furnace if he wanted the barracks to remain at a comfortable temperature. Dealing with frigid winters like the ones in Kentucky were all new experiences to Ralph. During his time at Fort Campbell Kentucky, Ralph noticed that he was the only Hispanic in the camp and in his training group out of 240 new recruits. Ralph was exposed to a lot of new cultures like those of Italians and people from Massachusetts. The only trouble Ralph managed to find was understanding the accent that people from Massachusetts had. “There were a lot of people from Massachusetts there and they would say ‘pass-ah-tah.’ What in the world is that,”¹¹² Ralph would ask himself, “pass the tea,” is what they were trying to say to him. Fort Campbell Kentucky where Ralph did his training was initially an artillery camp, and he was placed with the 75th Artillery Unit while completing his basic training. During Ralph’s time in Kentucky, he learned how to fight on the ground and how to accurately fire a rifle. When he was not training, once a week, he was chosen to guard the barracks at night. This was a duty everyone had to do and while on it, you had to stay up all night during the Kentucky winter. Overall, Ralph’s experience in basic training was a good one but he did describe it as being tough at times. “I had to learn. It was rough because I did remember my ankles got swollen due to the routine—we ran a lot and marched a lot.”¹¹³ Ralph spent five months in Kentucky before he was allowed to go back home and visit his family before going to Korea (figure 6.1).

¹¹⁰ Luna, Ralph “Oral Interview with Ralph Luna, Janie Luna Navarro, Eloisa Luna, and Norma Riddle.” Interview by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. October 19, 2018.

¹¹¹ Luna, Ralph “Oral Interview with Ralph Luna, Janie Luna Navarro, Eloisa Luna, and Norma Riddle.” Interview by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. October 19, 2018.

¹¹² Luna, Ralph “Oral Interview with Ralph Luna, Janie Luna Navarro, Eloisa Luna, and Norma Riddle.” Interview by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. October 19, 2018.

¹¹³ Luna, Ralph “Oral Interview with Ralph Luna, Janie Luna Navarro, Eloisa Luna, and Norma Riddle.” Interview by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. October 19, 2018.

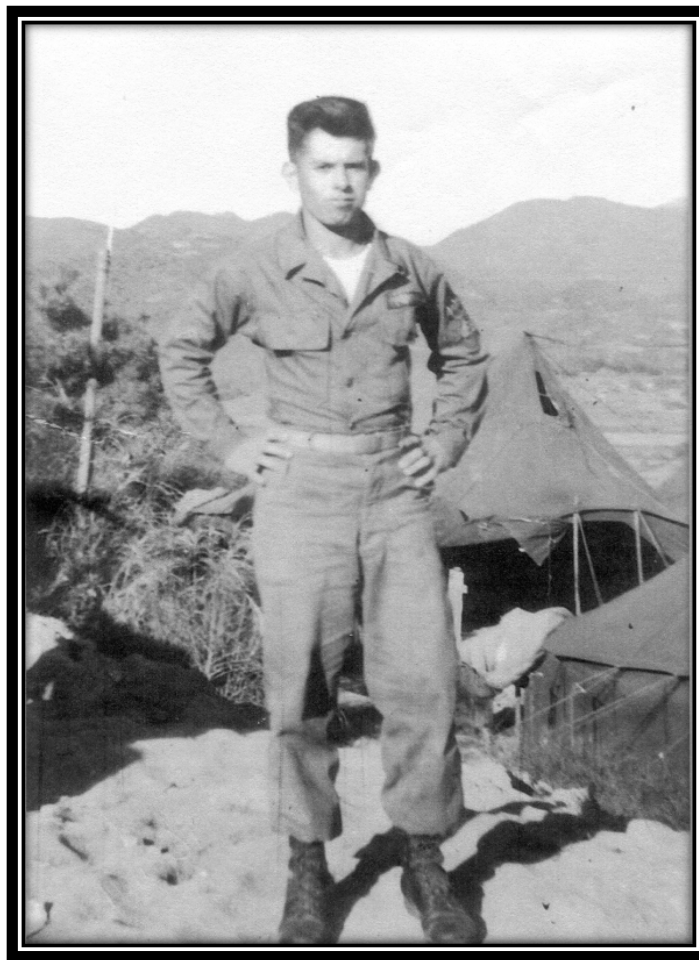


Figure 6.1 Ralph in Uniform in Korea.

The War

Ralph began his voyage to Korea by ship to Japan. It took him seventeen days to travel from San Francisco to Japan. He was not too fond of the voyage. He remembers feeling nauseous for the first two days and he could not keep anything down. By the third day, Ralph recalls getting used to it but he still did not like being on the ship for that long. Ralph recalls having friends who were in the Navy and would stay on the ships for months at a time, a fact he could hardly fathom. He was in Japan for a week before -to Ralph's displeasure-they would embark on another boat ride to Korea. However, this time the voyage was only four days long. Once he got to Korea, he was assigned to the 7th Division with Bravo Company. Ralph along with six other soldiers, were sent to the front lines on the 38th parallel to relieve seven soldiers who had been fighting in Korea for over a year now. The camp was called Old Baldy and on Ralph's first day there, he would come to know the sounds of the Korean War:¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Luna, Ralph "Oral Interview with Ralph Luna, Janie Luna, Eloisa Luna, and Norma Rydl." Interview by Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas. October 19, 2018.

After that initial first contact, Ralph knew that if he ever heard that distinct noise again to run to the side of the hills where they had built a little bunker to protect them from any bombardments from the North. Bombardments of Old Baldy were very common throughout Ralph's time in Korea. One night, Ralph remembers one of the worst bombings he faced was when over twenty bombs were dropped on Old Baldy. On that night, they took several casualties and Ralph remembers having to take part in the recovery of the fallen. Ralph was chosen to be a Captain's Driver (Appendix L) where his responsibilities were to protect the Captain, move the artillery guns via his jeep, and make sure everyone was okay as well as doing things in a speedy manner, and radio back to headquarters (Figure 6.2).



Figure 6.2 Ralph's jeep in Korea

Ralph recalls the job of a driver to be a dangerous one due to many factors. The driver of the jeep had to know the terrain very well because if he was caught speeding over a certain area, he could end up rolling the jeep over and killing himself or his passengers. The captain told him about many instances where too many drivers had been killed simply because they did not watch their speed through various roads. Another danger that was present to Ralph was the fact that at times he had to drive at night without headlights. If you let a single glimmer of light be seen at night, the enemy observers would pick up on it and begin to bomb your position. Ralph remembers having to drive multiple times at night and always being very cautious as to what he was doing so that he would not present himself as an easy target to the enemy. [Lastly, Ralph remembers having made contact with unknown people while he was out driving by himself. He could not understand the language they were

speaking but he assumed they were asking him to pull over. Ralph did not take the risk of pulling over and letting them take him as a potential prisoner of war so whenever this happened, he would accelerate and make his way as fast, but as safely as possible to the following headquarters.]

The war was over for Ralph on July 27, 1953. He recalls everyone being so happy that it was over. With the war having concluded, the army gave Ralph the option of staying for a bonus and giving him the rank of Sergeant. Ralph declined stating that his fiancé was waiting for him back home. He finally made it back to Edinburg on October 24, 1954.

Outcome of the War

Once Ralph Luna returned home, he remembers suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Initially, he would have nightmares that would wake him up in the middle of the night. He realized that the more he talked about it the worse his nightmare got due to the stimulation of the memories he had like having to take part in the personnel recovery when they were bombed over twenty times. The memory of him having to place body parts in body bags was one of his recurring nightmares. Overall, however, Ralph Luna does not regret anything he did during the Korean War. He believes that it was his experiences during this conflict that made him appreciate what he has in his life and states he would do it all over again to protect his family. After completing his obligation to his country Ralph was ready to take part in the next chapter of his life that lead him to help other farmers with his efforts in the United States Department of Agriculture.

Ralph and Rodolfo's USDA Experience

The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) is so closely tied together that it seems to be in its own bubble. Many people have come to live in the RGV and they have left their history behind. The Luna family from Edinburg has lived in the Valley all their lives and functioned as a farming family. Farming is something that is not pursued as much today as it was back when the Luna family immigrated to the US. The Valley tends to grow side to side instead of upward, so all the land is now being overrun by buildings and stores. This family contributed a lot to the way the Valley is today. It is important to keep up the history allow others to be aware of who came before us and why they are so important. Rodolfo Luna, one of the Luna brothers, did mention that nowadays, not too many people know where their food comes from and freak out when they find out. As the future is growing, there comes the question of what happens next? There are not too many farmers in the Valley now and what will happen if the demand only requires a couple of famers? These questions do need to be considered especially in these day and age, because now technology is on the rise and the thought of machines taking over human work is actually pretty eerie. Throughout all that though, in the past and present, the Luna family has seen it all. From droughts, to freezes, the Valley will always be home to them. It is fortunate that farmers do

not have to face natural disasters alone. There are resources and programs available to farmers that can help them assistance them whenever disaster may strike. The United States Department of Agriculture, or the USDA, is a program that helps farmers with whatever assistance they may need. According to the website, its purpose is to provide leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition and related issues based on public policy.¹¹⁵ The Luna family on some occasions did need the aide of the organization, and why not? If the help is available, then take advantage of it! Ralph Luna did refer to the organization, or rather part of the organization as the Agriculture Conservation Service, now called the Kika de la Garza Agriculture. He held specific duties while employed there, such as being a reporter who checked crops and then was promoted to supervisor and was in charge of the reporters. Ralph gave examples of how the government would provide the assistance to the farmers or how they would give them certain allotments. An example Mr. Luna provided was if the government gave you an allotment of 100 acres and the farmer could only plant 80 acres, then the rest of the 20 acres would be reserved. Overall the USDA, and the ACS were both great organizations for farmers to be able to gain the extra assistance needed. Especially in times like these, the extra help can be very useful and needed. The Luna family even had Ralph work for the organization, so he got to have the experience of what it was like to work there and gained the knowledge of what services and assistance was available to them. It seems that the USDA contributed to the Luna family because Rodolfo and Ralph got to experience the assistance, they provided to them as well. Such as helping Rodolfo leveling out the land in his backyard and giving him funds until they ran out.

Not only did the organization provide the extra assistance, but it also helped form a type of friendship with other farmers as well. The interactions with other farming families can seem to help as well when it comes to certain issues. When interviewing Rodolfo, he informed us that he has a friend and whenever they need to borrow equipment or tools they would, except the tractors. This just goes to show how the farming families down here all interact. There are not too many farmers now and when it comes down to it, the older farming families of Edinburg all know they can rely on each other.

Ralph did mention the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, which is also a part of the USDA. What this corporation does is that it is part of the Risk Management Agency, which is also under the USDA branch. What the FCIC does, according to the official website, is that it is a wholly owned government corporation that administers the Federal Crop Insurance Program. More specifically this program “promotes the economic stability of agriculture through a sound system of crop insurance and providing the means for the research and experience helpful in devising and establishing such insurance.”¹¹⁶ What this program does is help farmers to still receive compensation even for the crops that were not assisted especially when it comes to natural disasters. This is similar to what Ralph was

¹¹⁵ <https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/about-usda>. Accessed: November 25, 2018

¹¹⁶ <https://www.rma.usda.gov/fcic/>. Accessed: November 24, 2018

stating about the allotments. Although information on when it was actually started here in Edinburg is not available at the moment, it is safe to say that there was help available here in the Valley due to what Ralph and Rodolfo stated about the different programs.

What should be known is that sometimes farmers' land does not always grow the way the farmers want it to grow. A freeze can ruin an entire crop and if the crop is ruined, then they cannot sell the product, therefore they lose money. Rodolfo gave an example of what would happen when there would be a natural disaster. One year they had planted cabbage and there was a freeze. Due to this freeze, the cabbage cracked because of the moisture that would get inside. Then whole crop was ruined because of those cracks. Farmers go through quite a lot and it should be noted that sometimes they lose a good chunk of their crop often with no way of getting it back. Even though there is the help of the USDA/ACS it can still be a terrible thing to witness, as sometimes those crops were all they may have had. Rodolfo did inform us that the USDA would help which is a really great thing. They would help with whatever they could and that was more than enough for the Luna family. Especially here in the Valley, the temperature is mostly humid and hot so droughts are a common thing and sometimes these natural occurrences can be severe and there really is nothing anyone can do but let nature run its course.

It is important to realize the significance of the programs such as the USDA and many other programs that fall under the entire department. When the Luna's needed the help, from what both brothers had stated, they seem to have responded positively. Although it may seem like farmers might not have all the accessibility, they really do, thanks to the programs that are available to them. In today's current time, not too many people really understand the way the farm life works and the dedication the farmers have to take to keep up with the land and property. Getting information on what type of programs are available is a good way to start being engaged within the farming community. Rodolfo stated that there are not too many farmers now because most of the younger family members who should be taking over the farming are going off to college and do not want anything to do with farming. The community of Edinburg should have knowledge on how their land originally was and where their food comes from. Rodolfo's grandson actually made a great point because he stated that now people dissociate themselves from where their food comes from. Technology is advancing as time goes on and now people only think of farming because they might see it in a movie or a TV show. It is important to be engaged and to understand certain issues farmers faced but how certain programs helped them as well.

Conclusion

Edward Gonzalez

This class was quite the journey in which both the students participating in the field and the Luna family learned a great deal. The students who took part in this class had no idea what they were getting into. A great majority of the class stayed, even though during the first day of class Dr. Skowronek made it clear this was not a joke; that this was a serious project and we were here to work.

As the journey progressed, we came to the realization that we were a group which was made up of different majors. From Political Science to the Medical Fields, we were diverse in our preferences, but even then, we banded together to produce a cohesive family study. Friendships were formed and students grew to love their professors since we were all going through this experience together. We stayed together no matter the environment, from when it was humid, to when the mosquitos were attacking every inch of our bodies, and when we visited the Luna property during cold rainy days; we stuck through it all to ensure we got as much information as possible for the book. We learned to love this project although at first it seemed very intimidating. The fear soon drifted away as we came together and spoke with the Lunas about their lives in the Rio Grande Valley (Figure C.1).



Figure C.1. Ralph Luna and Aunt Janie (Luna Navarro) posing with students in front of John Deere tractor.

Since the first day the Luna family met with us, they were humble by nature. They greeted us with smiles, and they were eager to share stories. We were ready to ask questions and in order to truly know and understand what it was about the Luna family that gave them the longevity to surpass the inevitable occupation of land from subdivisions. Once a family rich in land was being forced further north to places like McCook because their land was being sold off to build another Peter Piper, Walmart, Plaza etc. And as the generations grow older, the Luna family is moving on to different pastures. Rather than staying and preserving the land, the younger Lunas are venturing to college and working in fields such as computer technologies.

The life of a farmer was never the most glorious or one to bring an abundance of wealth, but it is an honest living, and to the Luna Family, that was enough. Like Bobby Luna stated, they worked on the land in order to survive. It was a necessity prior to today's time to work with your hands. The Rio Grande Valley's soil is perfect for crops to flourish which explains how the Lunas surpassed other families in the long run. They worked with those they trusted and kept everything within the family. Every member of the family played a key role in fortifying the foundations of their lives. Along with having a sense of unity within the family, Roberto Luna shared that in order to truly last in the farming business you need to like what you do. If you don't like being a farmer, don't even enter the field because it isn't for you. And with this motto we can clearly see the Lunas didn't just like farming, they loved it. It's what kept their family going all these years. To this day both Bobby and Roy Luna continue their family's legacy in farming on the land they once saw their fathers and grandfathers work on. The future of farming may seem bleak since commercial land is taking over the Rio Grande Valley, but the Lunas work with what they have and survive. Unlike other families that were bought out or fled the agricultural life due to little profits, the Lunas withstood the test of time by banding together and working twice as hard (Figure C.2). The Lunas adapted by switching the produce they farmed in order to keep with the times as we all know were changing. With this constant sense of adapting paired with their unmatched work-ethics the Luna Family prevailed and are still farming today.

The time our class spent with the Luna Family was an experience we will all remember. From finding odd bones on the outskirts of the property to sharing off the record conversations with the family members, we all took this experience to heart, both the students and Lunas. I can recall the time we first set foot on the property most of us never having to leave campus for a class. We were intrigued yet overwhelmed with the responsibility of this book being on our shoulders. But once we got into the grind it was clear that just observing, taking it all in, and getting our hands dirty was the main goal of the class. Coming home with dirt under my fingernails and thorns attached to my socks, I realized this was the true anthropology experience. Alongside conducting interviews, we dug into the soil in which the Lunas made their living and observed the plants which inhabited the property even before the Lunas.



Figure 2. Roberto Luna on the big combine Tractor

Overall it was a growing experience. A true experience if that makes any sense. Usually when you enroll in an Anthropology course, often it's the same "read article, write, read article, write" but what these professors introduced was a new way in viewing the profession. We escaped the bubble of everyday college norms and learned that the Rio Grande Valley is a vast region with rich history that you can only learn about when you speak to the residents who have lived here for decades. We now have a new standard in the way we view an Anthropology class. Like Roberto Luna stated to truly do something to the fullest extent you need to like it. So, as the semester draws to an end and we finally finish our chapters as a team, I feel I can speak for the rest of the class that we truly loved the experience (Figure C.3).



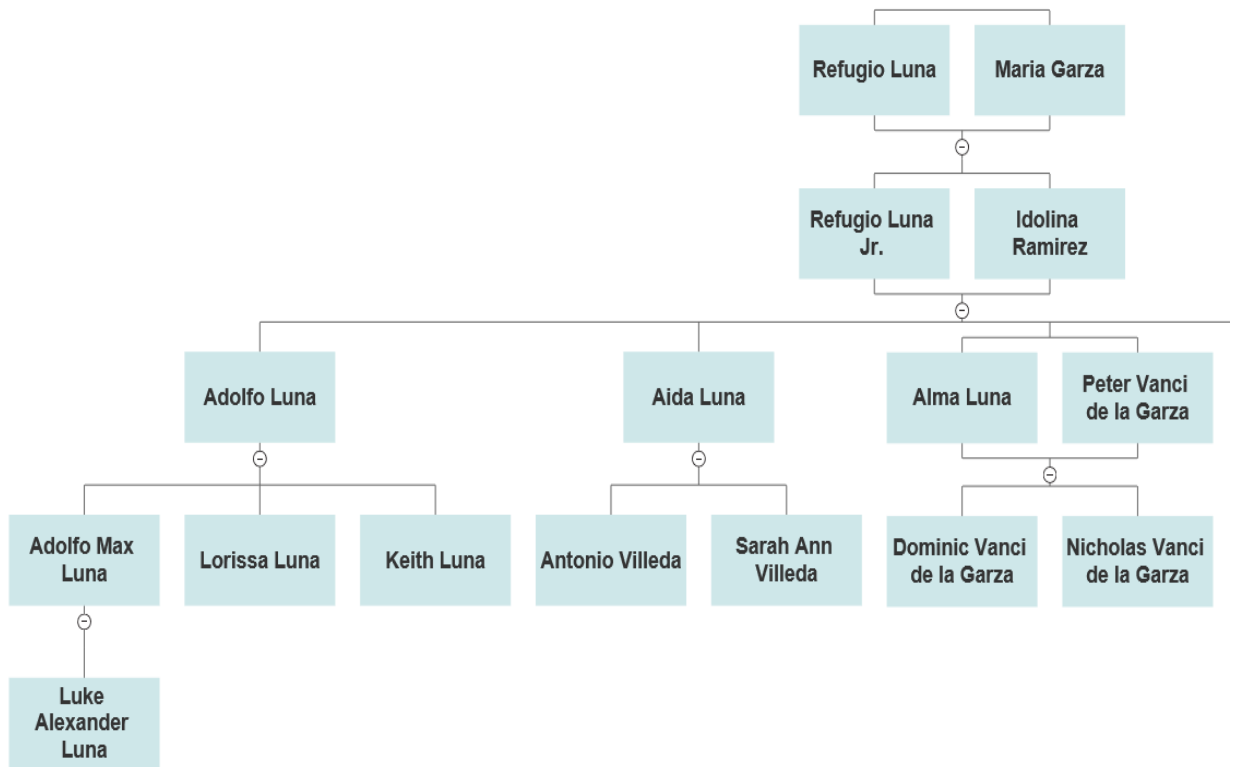
Figure 3. Luna family and CHAPS class group photo.

CHAPS Class with the Luna Family – Fall 2018 – Robert Luna's property

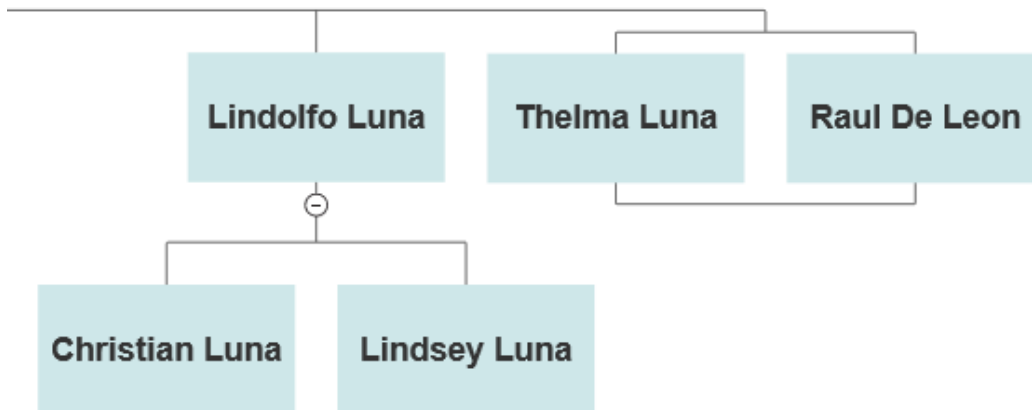
Kneeling left to right: Dayana Garza Gonzalez, Fernan Rojas
 First Row left to right: Becky Reyes, Ashly DeLeon, Caitlyn Rodriguez, Melinda Cantu
 Second Row left to right: Manuel Vera, Amancio Chapa, Evelyn Cantu, Edward Gonzalez,
 Mark Sifuentes, Rafael Martinez, Bobby Luna, Abigail Espinoza, Norma Luna Rydl,
 Roberto Luna, Ralph Luna, Maria Juanita (Janie) Luna Navarro, Rolando Luna, Karina
 Ramirez, Lorena Bryan, Myrabel Cantu, and Dr. Russell Skowronek
 Back Row left to right: Roseann Bacha-Garza, Olga Moya, Leann Castillo, Sandra
 Gonzalez, Lynn Rodriguez, Cullen Turk, Julio Smith, Jeanette Moritz and classmate friend.

1

Appendix C

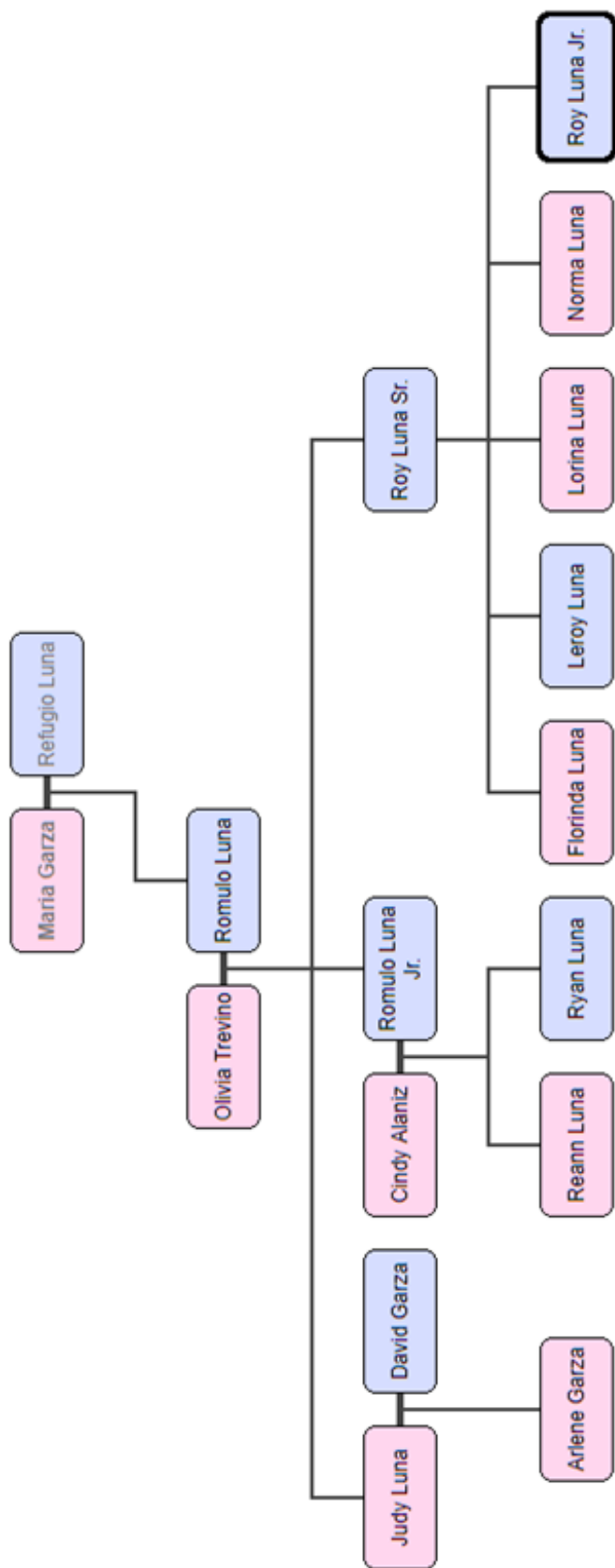


Children and grandchildren of Refugio Luna Jr. and Idolina Ramirez continued:



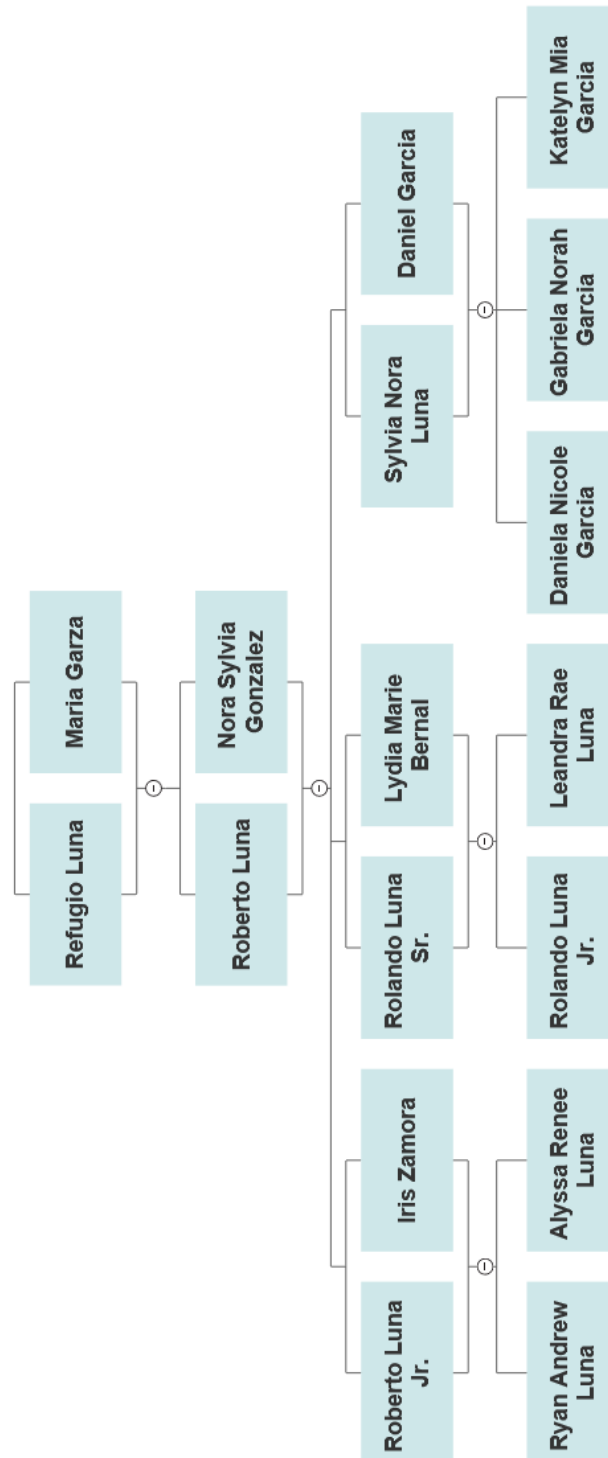
Family Tree of Refugio Luna Jr. Created On: <https://cloud.smartdraw.com>

Appendix D



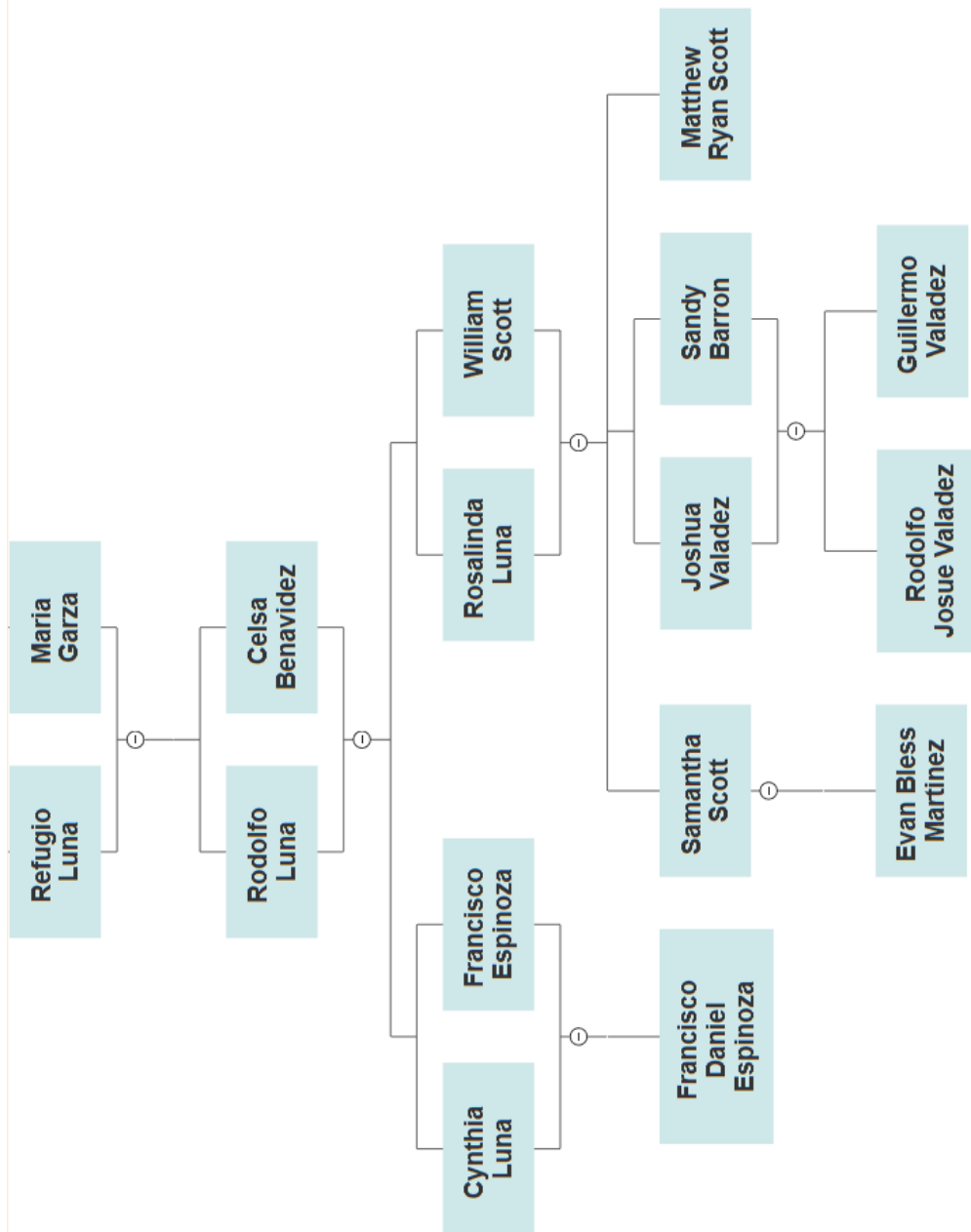
Family Tree of Romulo Luna Sr. Created on: Familyecho.com

Appendix F



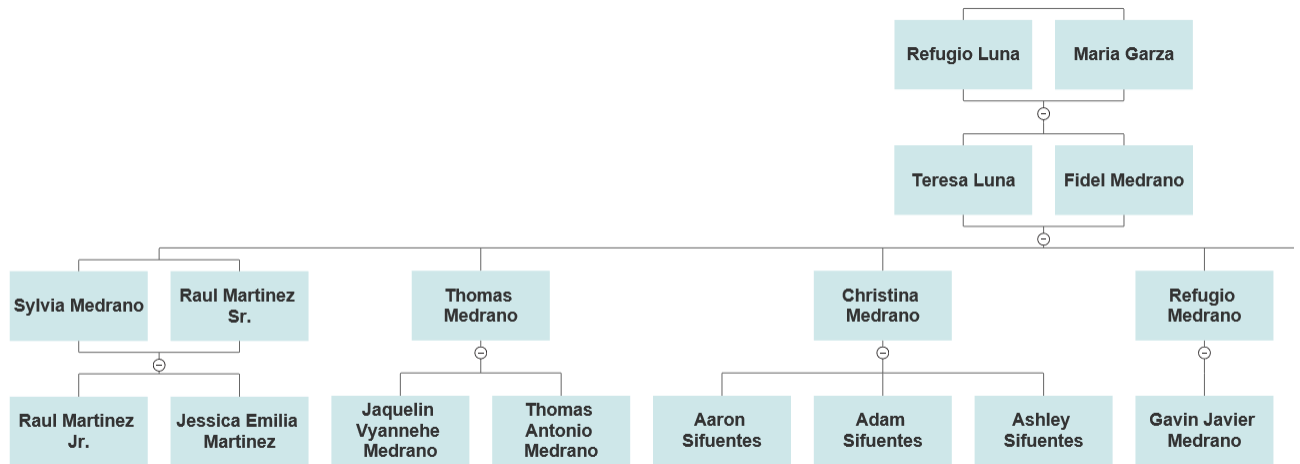
Family Tree of Roberto Luna Sr.
Created On: <https://cloud.smartdraw.com>

Appendix G



Family Tree of Rodolfo Domingo Luna.
Created On: <https://cloud.smartdraw.com>

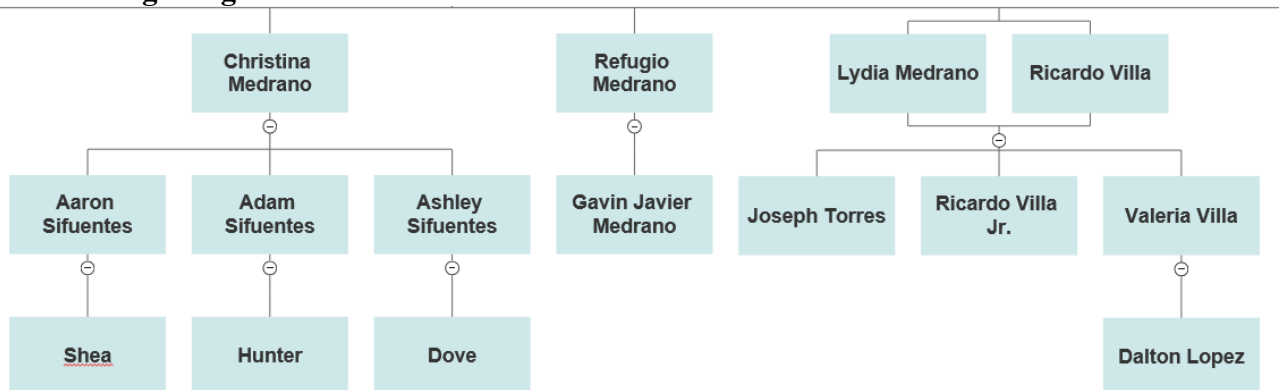
Appendix H



Continued children and grandchildren of Teresa Luna and Fidel Medrano below:

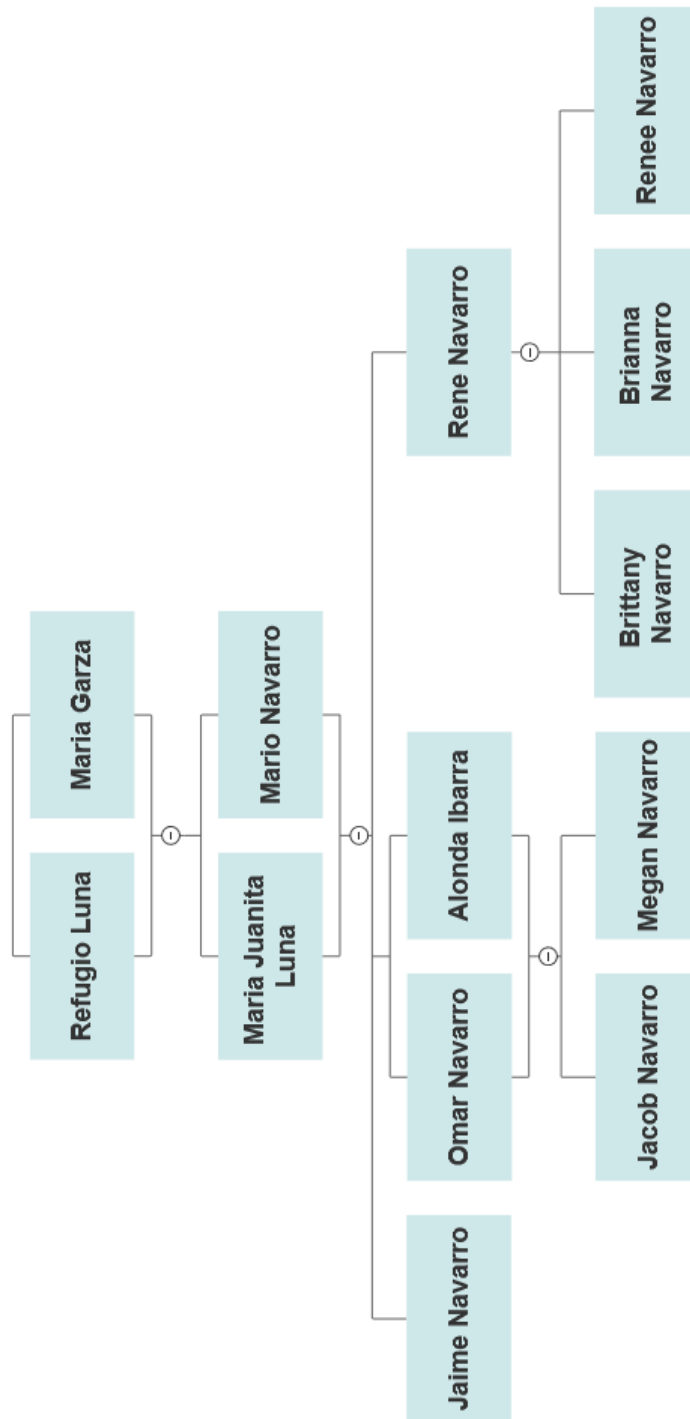


Continued great grandchildren of Teresa Luna and Fidel Medrano below:



Family Tree of Teresita de Jesus Luna Medrano.
Created On: <https://cloud.smartdraw.com>

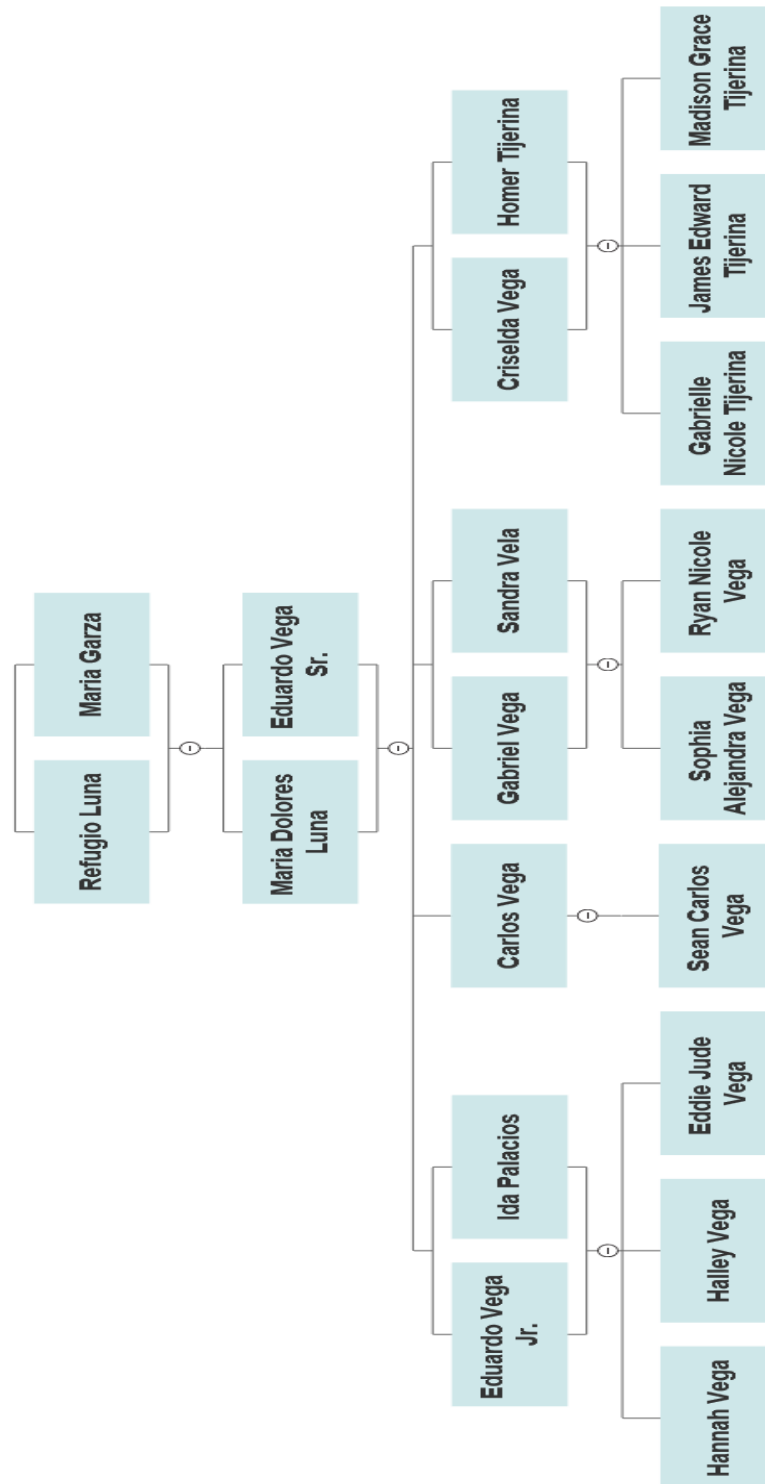
Appendix I



Family Tree of Maria Juanita Luna Navarro.

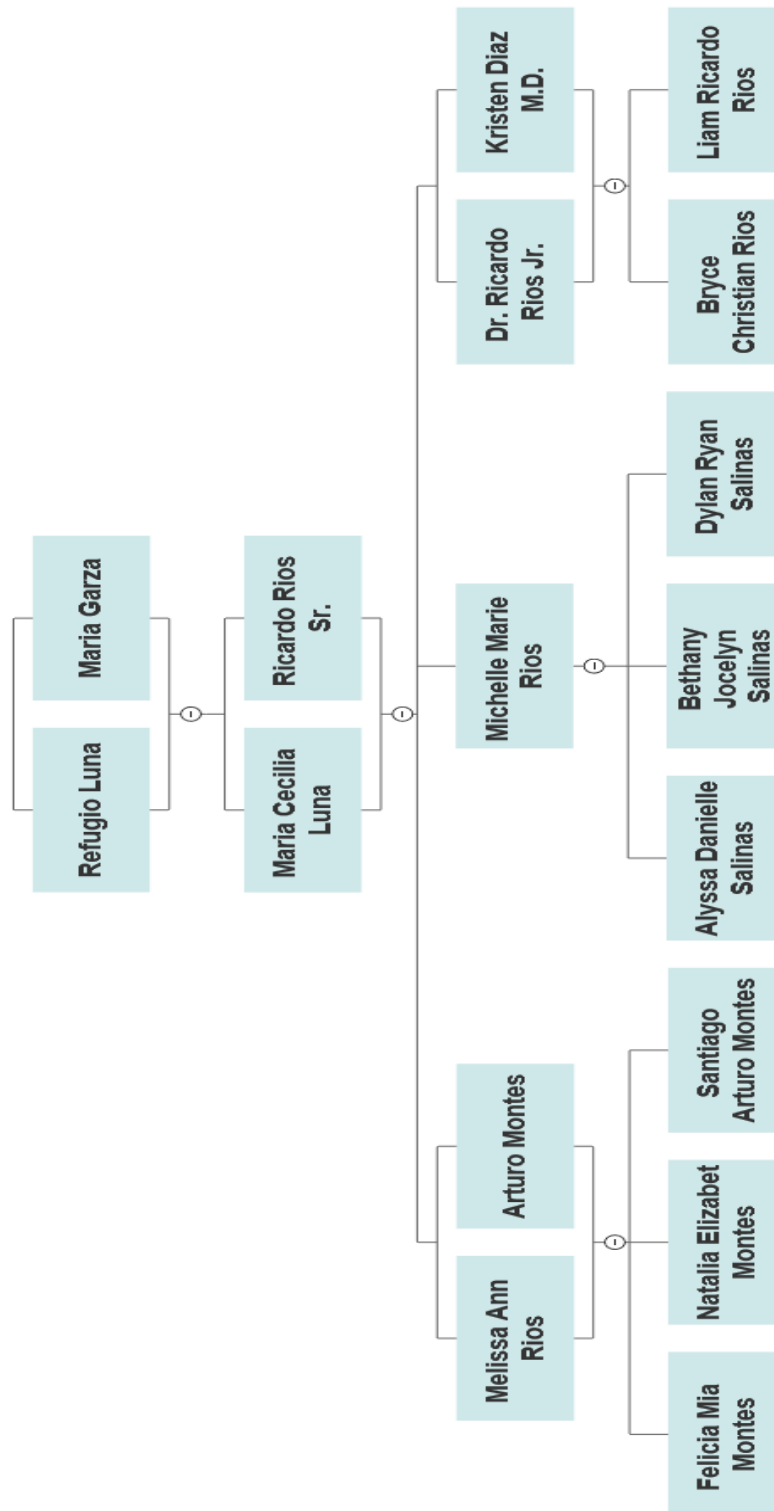
Created On: <https://cloud.smartdraw.com>

Appendix J



Family Tree of Maria Dolores Luna Vega.
Created On: <https://cloud.smartdraw.com>

Appendix K



Family Tree of Maria Cecilia Luna Rios.
Created On: <https://cloud.smartdraw.com>

Appendix L

Letter from military to Rafael Luna, discussing Military Occupational code change.

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH ARMY
Fort Sam Houston, Texas

Letter Order Nr MRU: 105-15807 14 Oct 55

SUBJECT: Change of Military Occupational Specialty Code (MOS)

TO: Cpl Ralph G Luna
ER54091322
Rt 2 Box 392
Edinburg, Texas

1. The Department of the Army has recently developed and published a new series of Military Occupational Specialty Codes (MOS) to be used in the Army classification system of the Regular Army and Army Reserve. Because of the complete revision of these codes, it is necessary at this time to change the primary MOS code you now have to one of the new codes recently established. The MOS code and description shown in paragraph 2 below, as your old MOS, is not necessarily the MOS and description of the last duty you performed while you were on active duty or assigned to a unit in a participating status. Instead, it may be the MOS in which it was determined, from a review of your records, that you are best qualified to hold in a Reserve status.

2. Your Military Occupational Specialty has been changed as follows:

<u>Old MOS Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>New MOS Code</u>	<u>Description</u>
1704	Field Artillery Operations Chief	1146	Field Artillery Operations and Intelligence Specialist

3. The above change is as directed by Department of the Army Circular 140-6, 1955.

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL COLLIER:













Reuben Star
REUBEN STAR
Lt Col, AGC
Asst Adj Gen















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Appendix M

Bone Classifications - Chart of animal remains found on the Luna properties October 2018

Classification	Location	Classification	Location
 Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) Femur	Pasture 10/8	 Jackrabbit size (Lepus) Vertebrae	Pasture 10/8
 Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) Tibia with fused fibula	Pasture 10/8	 Pig (Sus scrofa) Skull fragment	Field 2 10/29
 Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) Vertebrae	Pasture 10/8	 Coyote (Canis latrans) Femur	Pasture 10/8
 Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) by association pelvis fragment	Pasture 10/8	 Coyote (Canis latrans) Vertebrae	Pasture 10/8
 Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) Pelvis	Pasture 10/8	 Coyote (Canis latrans) Skull fragment	Field 2 10/29
 Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) Vertebrae	Pasture 10/8	 Coyote (Canis latrans) Vertebrae	Pasture 10/8
 Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) Vertebrae	Pasture 10/8	 Coyote (Canis latrans) Skull fragment	Field 1 10/22

 <p>Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) Vertebrae</p>	Pasture 10/8	 <p>Coyote (Canis latrans) Skull fragment</p>	Field 1 10/22
 <p>Unidentified squirrel (Sciuridae) by association pelvis fragment</p>	Pasture 10/8	 <p>Coyote (Canis latrans) Skull - modified bullet hole</p>	Pasture 10/8
 <p>Unidentified mammal longbone fragment end/rounded-worn</p>	Pasture 10/8	 <p>Coyote (Canis latrans) Skull - modified bullet hole (View from underneath)</p>	Pasture 10/8
 <p>Small mammal Pelvis fragment</p>	Pasture 10/8	 <p>Sheep/Goat Skull</p>	Pasture 10/8
 <p>Small mammal fragment</p>	Field 2 10/29	 <p>Sheep/Goat Skull (View from underneath)</p>	Pasture 10/8
 <p>Woodrat (Neotoma sp.) Jaw</p>	Pasture 10/8	 <p>Size Cow (Bos tarsus) by association Metapodial</p>	Field 1 10/29

	Field 2 10/29		Field 2 10/29
	Field 2 10/29		Field 2 10/29
	Field 2 10/29		Field 2 10/29
	Field 2 10/29		Field 1 10/29
	Field 2 10/29		Field 1 10/29
	Field 2 10/29		Field 2 10/29
	Field 2 10/29		Field 2 10/29

 <p>Jackrabbit (Lepus) Tibia-proximal end</p>	Pasture 10/8	 <p>Size Cow (Bos taurus) Ulna</p>	Field 1 10/29

Appendix N

November 12, 2018

Projectile point artifacts found on Luna farm in 1995, Edinburg, TX

Per Tom Hester, via e-mail correspondence to Russell Skowronek on Sunday, November 11, 2018:

“The point is reminiscent of ‘Ponchartrain’, but I have handled a bunch of those, and it does not look like it would “feel” just right. ‘Kent’ supposedly occurs as far south as the central coast, but they are mainly an amalgamation of crude stemmed points that fit in nothing else.”

Material: Chert

Found at Rodolfo Luna’s property in 1995 (see figure 3.36). This “contracting stemmed point” is reminiscent of but not identical to Hidalgo, Kent, and Pontchartrain points which date from Early Archaic 3500-6000 BC to Middle Archaic 2500 BC.



LUNA POINT

Appendix N - Continued



KENT POINT



HIDALGO POINT(S)



PONCHARTRAIN POINT

Middle Archaic
3156-2873 B.C.

Early Archaic
6000-3500 B.C.

Middle/Transitional Archaic
2000 B.C. - 500 A.D.

Kent Point

Kent points were first published as a group of dart points found at the Kent-Crane site. Though Campbell (1952) did not name the point form, they were the basis for the Suhm and colleagues (1954) type label. Overall, they are small, with often asymmetrical triangular bodies (perhaps linked to resharpening), and usually with a prominent medial ridge. The shoulders are squared to indistinct, and the stems often have a cortex at the base. Per Turner, Hester & McReynolds (2011: 120)

Hidalgo

This is a sturdy point, usually with an expanding stem and more or less bulbous base. It is usually biconvex in cross section and few are less than 10mm thick. They range from narrow lanceolate to broadly ovate in outline. The shoulders are generally rounded; others, strongly shouldered, verging on barbed. The stem outline is variable, and basal corners are usually rounded. They may be reworked so that one or both lateral edges angle abruptly to a newly placed tip. Per Turner, Hester & McReynolds (2011: 113)

Appendix N - Continued

Ponchartrain

This long, slender point has straight to convex lateral edges, with the body shaped by well-executed parallel-flaking. Specimens have squared shoulders, which may be slight, and occasional barbs. The Rectangular stem has a straight to slightly convex base that sometimes retains cortex. Per Turner, Hester & McReynolds (2011: 153)

References:

Turner, Ellen Sue, Thomas R. Hester, and Richard L. McReynolds, Stone Artifacts of Texas Indians, Taylor Trade Publishing: New York, 2011.

Projectile Points – Edinburg, TX – 2018

#	Material	Type	Color	Period
1	Chert	Fresno	Light Brown/Yellow	Late Prehistoric A.D. 1200-700
2	Petrified Wood	Catan	Dark Brown w/white specks	Late Archaic 1000 B.C.
3	Rhyolite	Catan	Light Grey/ Dark Grey	Late Archaic 1000 B.C.
4	Chert	Matamoros	Light Grey	Late Archaic 1000 B.C.
5	Rhyolite	Matamoros	Light Grey	Late Archaic 1000 B.C.
6	Chert	Matamoros	Light Grey	Late Archaic 1000 B.C.
7	Chert	Manufactures Point (purchased)	Light Grey	Unknown
8	Chert	Ensor	Light Grey	Transitional Archaic 300 B.C.
9	Volcanic Rock	Catan	Black	Late Archaic 1000 B.C.
10	Rhyolite	Tortugas	Light Brown/Yellow	Middle Archaic 2500 B.C.
11	Chert	Pontchartrain	Dark Brown/Light Brown	Middle/ Transitional Archaic 2000 B.C.-500 A.D.

Appendix O

Interviewees: Ralph Luna, Juanita Luna Navarro, Norma Luna Rydl

Interviewers: Lorena Bryan, Danniell Viveros, Roseann Bacha-Garza
At Juanita L. Navarro's home – Saturday, November 10, 2018

Ralph Luna was the largest contributor in this interview since he is, currently, the oldest living Luna and has memories dating further back than the others. Topics focused on were the impact the Great Depression had on the family, what it was like working for the USDA, and how they became involved in the CHAPS project.

Lorena: Today is Saturday November 10, 2018, what time is it?

Roseann: 2:13

Lorena: 2:13.

Ralph: I thought he was a student.

Lorena: Ok. So today, here present, is Lorena Bryan...

Danniell: Danniell Viveros

Roseann: Roseann Bacha-Garza

Lorena: And we are interviewing.....

Norma: Norma Luna Rydl

Janie: Juanita Luna Navarro

Ralph: Ralph Luna

Lorena: What was the first question? (chuckles)

Roseann: Can you push pause for a second?

(pauses recorder to eliminate background noise then starts it up after background noise subsides but Roseann is still talking about how the recorder picks up noise at a distance)

Roseann: In the same room but away from us. Let's say I was over here, like they were over way over there by the door I could hear him and and his, I could barely hear his voice and he was the one in front of the recorder. So, that was tough. Ok, thank you (television was turned down). So, go ahead, let's continue.

Lorena: It's started.

Roseann: Ok, so this is the last interview that we're going to have with the Luna family members right now. Um, and we're gonna call this the wrap-up interview because uh when we

met in class on Monday, I asked some of the students if there was any information that they were maybe lacking and might have wanted for their reports. And there were just a few subject matters that uh may not have been discussed with you all. And so um, in addition to, uh.. Lorena and Danniell might like to ask, we have a few questions that we would like to ask for you. So, do you guys have any specific questions at the moment?

Lorena: Uh, one of the questions that one of my cla- one of my teammates brought up was how the Great Depression affected you? I do not know if anyone asked this yet.

Roseann: Mmhmm

Janie: We weren't around.

Roseann: Well the Great Depression lasted- or started. In 1929 so was a little bit before you were born Ralph and you may not have been born yet. What year were you born?

Janie: [He was born in 1931]

Roseann: Ok, so you were right at the end. You were when the Great Depression was over.

Ralph: She was in the exact period (making Janie chuckle). That's when they had the gasoline butane, gasoline stoves.

Roseann: Mmhmm

Ralph: Electricity. Tv in 1950.

Roseann: Right, exactly.

Ralph: We had our first tv in 1950.

Roseann: Ok, well that makes sense.

Ralph: And it was black and white.

Roseann: Mmhmm mmhmm

Ralph: and it was wonderful.

Roseann: Wow

Ralph: (said through chuckles) The World Turns was one of the programs that started.

Roseann: That's soap opera. It's not on anymore but eh...

Ralph: It started for many years.

Roseann: It was, it was.

Janie: Lito, my brother, every twelve o'clock, he'd be there on time to see that show. He had his lunch-

Ralph: My dad and him [Lito] (laughing)

Janie: They were all hooked on it for years.

Danniell: My dad and my mom used to watch that.

Norma: It went in through generations, right?

Daniel: (laughing) yeah.

Roseann: Well even though you're not old enough to remember the Great Depression although, Ralph, you were um born a few years after you still lived a little bit through it as a young boy.

Ralph: I started with my parents had one, two rooms. One a kitchen the other a bedroom and it was a little hut. And there was no electricity and the stove was a wood stove. The iron stove. Mother had a real good stove at that time because it was six burners and she would put the fire and cook real well. And then in 1948 they [had] a stove with butane. We had electricity I would go to school and didn't have light just a lantern and no heaters.

Janie: Brazas or coal

Ralph: A bucket of coal and that was the way we warmed, and I think my dad would put a iron, so we could keep the coals from spreading the toxic [fumes]

Roseann: Oh, the fumes

Ralph: The fumes were bad, from the coals but you had to put something to bring them down or something.

Norma: Dad she had asked you about your mom and dad on the depression and you remember 'cause you were born in 1931— so what do you remember how it affected them.

Ralph: Well, I remember dad talking about it and my grandmother. They said that they came and were only there for about four to five years, but they were well off because they had cabritos, baby goats, deer meat, beef. But the main thing was [there was] no flour, they could not get flour to buy. They didn't get corn at that time and I remember them talking they would take the top of the corn, [the tassel]

Ralph: [They] call it the [tassel], and they would cut it and grind it and make tortillas out of it. And that was about a year or two years. They had to buy sugar and they would bring it from across Mexico. They would buy in bags, but they would order it. They would have an order and bring it.

Norma: Was it rationed? Did they ration it?

Ralph: No, they would buy 10- or 20-pound bags... it's the brown sugar.

Janie: It's a pioncillo, it's a brown sugar. It's not filtered. Raw. Its raw sugar

Ralph: Its raw sugar. The brown one.

Roseanne: Mmhmm..

Ralph: They had plenty of meat, like deer meat, and cabrito. and they [used the lard from the] farm animals. That['s] the only thing they talked about it. They ran out of flour.

Roseann: ok.

Ralph: they could not get flour. At that time [the] valley was so little ranch house[s] little towns. Like McAllen was just a main street that they would come every month and shop. But there

[were] very few houses. The ranchers had their own houses. And since they took over for a...a big ranch they had the opportunity to make money out of it. And they start working....

Ralph: My grandfather had four [sons]. And my grandfather made them [work]...he didn't give school to them at all. He had [them]work. My dad when he got married, and when my uncle the oldest got married. They bought a model T. the first model T that came out. They were [all] able to buy one. And [also]my grandfather bought one. Because [my grandfather] had three sons, and they were not married. And then they left [for] Mexico again [with] their pickups. My dad only lasted 8 months over there in Mexico.

Roseann: Mmhmm

Ralph: He didn't like it because he was already adjusted to the American style. [My dad] was the first one that came back and then the other ones followed. Within a year they were all back. They started from scratch. Since my dad was married to mother they lived in Hidalgo, my dad, came to work [with his] father in law. They stayed there and then [my] uncle [the] oldest that was married came in with his family and then my grandfather came in with all his family and that's the way they started here in Edinburg. They started working from scratch irrigating, hoeing cotton, and then my dad started [farming]. He bought a truck and they started hauling fruit.

Roseann: He became involved in the farming industry.

Ralph: My dad was always working; he would farm with two mules and two horses. And he would plant with those two horses and he planted corn and cotton but [in] 1942 when he was able to buy a tractor, he became better. He could farm, that's when he bought 80 acres where he lived. Where we all live.

Roseann: And now where Roberto's house is.

Ralph: Roberto, he's the one that kept the ranch. But my brother kept the main farm. The other ones got part of the equipment.

Roseann: Mmhmm mmhmm, it's true. So, we had a question in the class um you may have brought it up. Originally you mentioned that the family came over to Sullivan City around 1916...

Ralph: No, I have 1916 but it's 1925'.

Roseann: 1925'. Ok we just wanted to clarify that, yeah.

Ralph: I remember that I was thinking about dad about that flu, he was five or six years, but they were in Mexico and then they had another epidemic in 1924, something like that. There were some of his brothers got sick and then they got scared and they came over.

Roseann: Mmhmm... So, the flu, the influenza was at the end of WWI.

Ralph: Right, that was in 1916 or something like 1915 and that's when my father, my dad, lost... two brothers and a sister.

Roseann: Mmhmm

Ralph: The oldest was Rafael, that's how come I was named after him, because his older brother died, and he would say that he remembered him because [he]looked up to him.

Roseann: Mmm ok...But you do have a brother named Refugio?

Roseann: You have a brother named Refugio, one of your brothers was named that.

Ralph: Yes, the third one, named after my dad. Romulo, my second brother, was named Romulo [after][his] godparent.

Roseann: mmhmm.....

Roseann: What's their last name?

Janie: Garza.

Ralph: Garza. Zamora.

Roseann: Hmm.

Ralph: [Lupe his son] baptized my brother. His dad was Romulo. He said they would take a month in a wagon to go to San Manuel. And then to Falfurias. It would take him a month to check all the farms. So, he would come back in a month [to baptize].

Roseann: huh... why was he checking the farms?

Ralph: ...He was checking his lands.

Roseann: Was it property he owned?

Ralph: Yes, he would go in a wagon; there were no automobiles.

Roseann: right.

Ralph: That was way back in the nineteen thirties.

Roseann: mmhmm.....

Ralph: Like over here where I live. Roseann. Mr. Hoehn came in from Kansas, Kansas City. He came in nineteen thirty. And the government uh.. gave him..eighty acres.

Roseann: Mmhmm..

Ralph: The road where I live. Its Hoehn everybody pronounces it "Ho-en" but its [pronounced] *HAIN*. It's a German name. A lot of families came from Kansas. The government brought them down to the valley.

Roseann: mmhmm.

Ralph: The Hoehns, and the Atwoods, and the people of McCook.

Roseann: So that was during the Great Depression, if the[y] came during the nineteen thirties. The government gave them land.

Ralph: right.

Roseanne: Is that was they did?

Ralph: They came in and they had to pay for it ... but it was practically given.

Roseann: Yeah. Or very inexpensive.

Ralph: Something like that. Rio Farms over there in Elsa are some of them.

Roseann: Right. Right. Rio Farms.

Ralph: It came to [be an] organization. Rio Farms was an organization. Thousands of acres.

Roseanne: Oh yeah.

Ralph: This was [how] they all got their [land] just a couple and they got eighty acres.

Roseann: Well I believe the program is where? They were not necessarily given it as a gift there were...a lot of the acreage.

Ralph: Then they would pay us

Roseann: They would farm and they would use their profits to pay uhh..

Ralph: Mr. Hoehn said he would use people that were here, local people. They would call him 'calabasita'. 'Calabasita' because he would plant a lot of Calabaza, he would take them in a wagon and sell them in Edinburg.

Roseann: Uh huh..squash

Ralph: And he would take it in a wagon to sell them in Edinburg.

Roseann: Mmhmm..okay. Great!

Roseann: Can you clarify what the AC office is and what you did for them.

Ralph: Agriculture Conservation Services. Now it's called Kika de la Garza Agriculture Department.

Roseann: Can you describe what your job duties were then, with that organization?

Ralph: In 1957, I became a reporter. I was checking crops. And in 1960 I became a supervisor. As supervisor I was in charge of about 9 or 10 reporters and those reporters would check all the cotton crops that were planted, and we would measure them. Nine supervisors and about 10 reporters in each group. I [would] report all the crops to the AC. That's when the government would give an allotment of 100 acres and then out of that you could only plant 80 and you had to reserve 20 acres.

Ralph: They wouldn't give you the whole allotment we made sure that the farmer did not go over his allotment. If he planted over that then he had to destroy it.

Norma: (gasps) He'd get penalized?

Ralph: No, not penalized but they would have to cut it down

Roseann: That is a penalty.

Ralph: Then the government would pay them for that extra acres that they planted; they would get a check.

Roseann: It's kind of a subsidy, in a way.

Ralph: Right, and I think the government still pays people... If they plant so much, they still give you money to reduce. And I think president Trump is coming with something for the farmers. He's working something with that. Because he's trying to reduce. That's a program they have to look after to see that they all don't go over their allotment.

Roseann: They follow their, yes, they follow their allotment.

Ralph: So, we have maps and we give them to the reporter, we give them the lots and the farm where they have to go and then reporters would write measurement of each farmer. And then they would turn it in. Then the office would have girls that figured out the acres and they would let them know if they were ok if not, they had to pay to have somebody check what they have gone over. They had to destroy the crop, the crop that they had gone over.

Roseann: Sounds a little familiar to what happened during the Great Depression. When they actually made farmers destroy crops because there were so much of a surplus. And the sad thing was that when there were people starving...

Ralph: That was the corn. They didn't have flour, but now is not that. It's just that the farmers were planting too much. Then the price was going down...

Roseann: They need to

Ralph: Bring it up

Roseann: The reason for the allotment was that so the price doesn't go way down so that it's a fair price for both the farmers and the consumer.

Ralph: Big farmers would get a lot of money... and with that money they would keep the farm going. I remember the more land you had the bigger check you would get.

Roseann: Sure sure. So, were you responsible for handing out the checks or—

Ralph: No no, you see I managed the crops. I would be in charge first I would measure the crops. I had a supervisor over me but then I became a supervisor and I had reporters [to] measure the land we would measure the land and give it to the girls in the office and they would figure [it] out and, believe me, it was something that I loved because I was involved with the farmers. I knew the farmers. Then they would call me, and we had to send somebody to go and measure the crop that they had been destroyed.

Roseann: and with the um uh... And with that you say that you knew all the farmers back then.

Ralph: Back in my area because, you know, there was about 8 supervisors to each had his group. I had my group, east of Edinburg, it was from Elsa Edcouch up to La Villa.

Norma: he had all his maps.

Ralph: She said maps. They knew the maps had pictures and everything. We would measure and then put a line in the map and the map would go to the office and they would measure it to see if it was right.

Norma: It's like the appraisal. When we have our land appraised, he already asks, "What lot is it?", and you're going like (shrugs shoulders saying I dunno). Because he knows them by the lots, the numbers, and other stuff like that. And all I know is well it's on sprig or it's on, but he can tell you the exact number because that was all numbers in his head.

Ralph: And we had 40 or 50 farms and then they had the name and then the lot number. They would take them in the office the girls would go farm by farm [make sure] they had the amount of acreage that you're supposed to have. We would just report the amount.

Roseann: So, you knew all the farmers in that region that you were responsible for. The years that you were doing it between. You said you started in 1957, how long did you do it for?

Ralph: 1982

Roseann: Ok, so between 1957 and 1982 were all the farmers the same farmers or were they new ones coming in or did the farms get bigger and some people go out or did they get smaller and new people came in?

Ralph: Mostly all the farmers were the same farmers. Now after I left, the older farmers had some farms taken over my dad was the farmer, but I was already involved with him. My dad knew what he was doing, and I would help but I was not the main one my dad was the main.

Roseann: And you were, uh your father's farm and or your brothers were not part of your territory that was in east enough in...

Ralph: No, no I was on the east side.

Roseann: Did you happen to be responsible for looking at the Roegiers' farm on the east side of Edinburg?

Ralph: Oh yes! I could go check anywhere after we finished surveying all the lands and getting all the information then the ones that were over had to go and pay a penalty and I would be sent to anybody in Hidalgo.

Roseann: Cause the two farming families that we studied before you were the Fike family, which is on the east side of 281 and I don't know if that was in your territory and the Roegiers family...

Ralph: He was in my territory but in a group. But the first to measure the east and then the other ones were in the south, north up to San Isidro all the way to Hidalgo. All that area, all Hidalgo. And they would go by maps 1A, 120, and then it would go by numbers. Up and down to the river, from north to the river. And you see the map would go like that. And they still have them there at the AC office. And they kept pictures. And then when I uh retired from there they came in with a computer company...

Roseann: That was around about that time that (laughs)

Ralph: And I know that because I worked... During the season that was no crops they would put me to work helping the one that ran the uh autographs. Where they make the letters and the names. And sometimes the girls would, after eight or nine years, she would quit and then they'd say, "Ralph, come and help". I would help for a couple of weeks and I said no I wanna be out in the farm.

Roseann: mhmm

Ralph: I don't want the office and then a "we'll give you this and give you school. And I said no, I'll help but I don't want the position. One time I stayed six months in there had ear problems. And when the machine was rolling, I would be ok for a couple of days but after that..my ear would get sore so I had to quit. I would go "no" but I did have a girl that when I quit I trained and she stayed and she's still there.

Roseann: oh wow.

Roseann: thirty something years. *laughs*

Ralph: and she still [there] 1982 when I moved out..

Roseann: mmhmm..

Ralph: Se took over. But it was hard for that position. Because you have to type the addresses of each farmer.

Roseann: mmhmm..

Ralph: The address, and its got a little template. And you would make the template...you would put them in a big machine. And if one of those little plates would get out of order..

Roseann: ...out of order..

Ralph: It would ruin all [work] you had to take them out. Replace it. I would make a new plate

Roseann: mhmm..

Ralph: And I learned to do it. And believe me it was very [hard]. I would be working with my hands and my foot. Tried to keep them... going and they wanted me to stay there but I didn't want that.

Roseann: *laughs*

Ralph: ...and believe me with the foot and [hands] I had to learn that because I knew how to type.

Roseann: mhmm

Roseann: Where did you learn how to type? In the...

Ralph: High school.

Roseann: oh, high school. Ok

Ralph: High school. Then I went to college... half a year. And I did take typing there so I knew how to [type] but I was good enough to write the name and address and make the little plate.

Roseann: mhmm..

Ralph: That was the most important thing. That your plate would not get out of order because if it would get out of order..its like if you were..train..in other words when the machine was going down it was like rolling a train. With the sound. And it would be real fast.

Roseann: sure.

Ralph: and it would come down. And the plate would hit the envelope and then put the letter and throw it out. And you had to be really careful those plates kept on going down. It was fun. I liked it at first but then after that my ears didn't help.

Roseann: ok

Ralph: so that's what I used to do there. They would call us during the... planting season and... planting season was from about January to about May and then from there...the supervisor would stay there working in the office.

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: It took us years to get that fixed up because we had to make a new map that..so many footage away from each farm so we had to write the expressway. The new one going to Brownsville. But ours was just up to La Feria. That's where the sugar plant is.

Roseann: mhmm..

Ralph: That where the hidalgo line is.

Roseann: mhmm..

Ralph: That line over there its Willacy.

Janie: County

Roseann: mhmm

Ralph: That's another county.

Roseann: Mhmm. Santa Rosa has the big sugar plant.

Ralph: Well that belong in hidalgo.

Roseann: Yes. Right, that is correct.

Ralph: They have in the office so many acres of sugar plants. Now they have pictures of that. The airplane takes pictures.

Roseann: oh ok.

Ralph: and they have a machine in the office where they can tell whether its cotton or they can tell what is planted.

Roseann: I think Mercedes is the border of Hidalgo county is that correct?

Ralph: No.

Janie: Yes.

Ralph: Mercedes yes right.

Roseann: But you didn't go all the way to Mercedes you just went..

Ralph: Just uh..west and all the way to the river.

Roseann: Mhmm..wow..

Ralph: That was all the way to..let me see.. way up to San Manuel.

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: Still I don't know how.. it was a lot of brush and some farms. And you would go in the farms and they would have lots.. you would have to get all the keys to go in with the airplane.

Roseann: They just...

Ralph: they take a picture and they know exactly

Roseann: mhmm...

Ralph: How much uhh you have in crops.

Norma: And you were there until 1980?

Ralph: [1982]

Roseann: I remember.

Ralph: I was uh..laid off.

Roseann: aww...

Ralph: ...During that time the AC office. Didn't have no jobs.

Janie: Laid off..

Ralph: Laid off some workers.

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: And I started working with the sugar cane.

Roseann: oh ok..

Ralph: and I worked for a year with them.

Roseanne: which sugar cane uh..

Ralph: here in santa rosa.

Roseann: oh at santa rosa the big..

Ralph: yes and I worked as a umm.....assistant manager.

Roseann: mhmm..

Ralph: and I learned how to drive those sugar cane machines. It was fun but I didn't drive them because my job was to take the people to the field and then I would uh.. count the loads of each because we had to count the loads of sugar cane each owner had. Because we were in a patch..and they would remember and we would send all those trucks to the sugar cane. And that's what I would do. And I would take charge of the keeping the rosters of the people that worked their hours. I worked for a year, I—I didn't like that very much because it was (said with a chuckle) one month it was at night, all night, and another month uh it was during the day.

Norma: Oh, so it was all day and all night?

Ralph: No, it's just that one month we [had] shifts...

Roseann: Ok, so you had twelve-hour shifts or eight-hour shifts?

Ralph: Eight-hour shifts

Roseann: Ok

Ralph: And I [had] to drive the bus from there, at that time I became a bus driver and I had a get a license (chuckles)...

Ralph: So, I could take them from the field and to the office, they would meet at the office every morning, take them to the field and bring them back. We would have lunch over by the river.

Roseann: So, that AC office you were talking about is part of the USDA, correct?

Ralph: That's it, right.

Roseann: And, so when you were involved with them between 1957 and 1982 would you say that you got to be friendly or friends with many farmers in the region? You said you were...

Ralph: Oh yes because I knew a lot of them in south were farmers that their sons had gone to school with me like the Bairs.

Roseann: I do, we did a report on them too. So, Dwain Bair is your—

Ralph: Dwain, he went to school with me and his brother Howard. And uh then they were cousins to the Sterlings, my neighbors. And they were all farmers and... Atwoods.

Roseann: Another family we studied.

Ralph: [At] the AC office all the farmers would come to sign first, as a farmer they had to sign up to say that they, I'm gonna sign up for so many acres. They had a limit, they had to sign up for the program. So, I knew sometimes I would help when there were too many farmers coming in I would help them sign up.

Roseann: Were there too many farmers coming in that um would go over the allotment for the region or did you ever have to tell people no, they couldn't—

Ralph: No, first they didn't know. At first, they'd sign up and nobody knew how much they were gonna plant. Even themselves they would try to be as close as they could, but some would pay to have it measured and we did that. We would go and apply, sign up for 40 acres. So, we would tell them from here to here you can plant, and they would be ok. But the other ones that took on their own to find out how much, if they had an allotment of 30 and they would plant 31 they would have to destroy one acre.

Norma: I'm curious. But every farmer says, if I didn't go and apply for the allotment and I planted what would happen to me?

Ralph: If they didn't apply, they were out of the program.

Janie: Just destroy the crop.

Norma: Just destroy the...

Janie: Yeah.

Ralph: I mean the ones that did not apply that means that they were not gonna plant no crops.

Norma: Oh, oh yeah...

Ralph: The only ones that wanted to apply is because they were gonna get some money.

Norma: Ok

Ralph: And the ones that didn't apply it's because they had citrus, or they had cattle.

Roseann: So, if they had umm acreage umm and they knew that they would not be allowed to plant all the acreage in order for them to make up money that they would otherwise lose by not being allowed to plant the acreage they had to sign up for your program, plant what they were allowed to plant and be paid for the non-planting and all the other acres they owned. That was a way for them to get money.

Ralph: Right, you're correct.

Roseann: Ok

Ralph: Because if they would go over, they would not get paid or that they were not given the money because they would have to destroy that amount. They didn't qualify they were not in the limits. I think they had to be in the limit so they could get everything...

Janie: Qualify

Ralph: They would lose all what they plant if they didn't comply with the amount of acres they supposed to plant. Then they were out. And I don't know if they could even sell the crop.

Roseann: Yeah, nowadays uh or at least recently, in the news, I read an article about a uh the president allowing uh farmers to plant more uh more corn because they were going to, the government was going to allow more ethanol in the gas. I—in the manufacturing of gas.

Ralph: Because I think that if they let them plant everything there would be no program...they'd get no payment.

Roseann: mmhmm..

Ralph: They would be able to sell all their corn. Mexico buys a lot of corn for the tortillas.

Roseann: mmhmm..

Ralph: their...Mexico do not plant enough for their nation. They have to buy from the United States. Or other countries that supply them.

Roseann: mmhmm..okay. Do you have any other questions with regard to the USDA? Or..

Lorena: No. I don't.

Roseann: No? Was there another question that you guys have?

Danniel: Well mine..uh..I guess since..well im doing the introduction for the..for this thing so I guess..right of the bat..id just like to ask..like what were your thoughts or how would you feel when you were asked to take part in this project? Like what were your feelings over..you..

Roseann: Danniel is writing the introduction to the whole report. So his responsibility is to kind of...let everybody who's reading it know..how did you..how did it come to be that you became part of this..

Norma: He has a focus.

Roseann: This class. This project. How did you..

Roseann: What I'm asking er..what Daniel is asking is that..how did you hear about our class at UTRGV and how did you come to decide that we could come and visit you..

Ralph: Oh ok.

Roseann: And..and research your family.

Ralph: My nephew, Robert's son [Bobby], told me about five years ago about this program.

Roseann: Norquest.

Ralph: Norquest [told Bobby] [when] they were farming his land and [if] he was a Luna [he told them about the program].

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: And he told me if I wanted to [be in the program] he told them that he didn't know. That I was the only one that I could help.

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: I found out since I'm the oldest of the Luna. Of all the grandkids, I'm the oldest now living. All the other ones are deceased.

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: I'm the only one that knows exactly how they came about because.. through my grandparents and my dad kept telling us what they did and I remember when I was about three and a half years. I remember where we lived.

Danniel: mhmm..

Ralph: I would hear my grandmother talking about their life..

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: What they went through. Norma [told] me...and that she had been approached, somebody in the restaurant wanted the Lunas to get involved. And then...she came to me...and I said 'well...this is the second or third time...yes Norma. Tell them that I will be [glad to do it].

Roseann: mhmm..

Roseann: Okay.

Norma: Only because he has [memory of those years].

Ralph: Mhmm..

Norma: He can tell you the years.

Roseann: Mhmm..

Norma: A lot of the cousins that we have.....say in my generation..can only go up to..a certain year. And they cant tell you beyond.

Ralph: Mmhmm..

Norma: The nineteen thirties and the nineteen forties or fifties. Cause some of us were not born.

Danniel: Right.

Norma: And so, we're going like 'dad still has all that [recollection].

Ralph: Mmhmm..

Norma: And I said, 'well you need to share your story'. And right now because you have all your sibling living ...except for one uncle [Romulo] that passed.

Roseann: Mmhmm..

Ralph: [My nephews do not know from [the past]. My brothers didn't talk about the old life...

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: Myself I didn't tell any of my kids what we went through..

Roseann: Mhmm..

Ralph: [the] only thing I had told Norma when she was little..if you want to be ahead I would start picking cotton and that's it. Well she didn't like it. Well you have to get your education to..to not be picking cotton.

Norma: Yes, because he would take us to the field with a gunny sack and go pick cotton!... I'm all cut and it's hard work!

Roseann: *chuckles*

Norma: If you wanted to go off be in the laborers, we had a lot of people that were out there working.

Ralph: Not real well... but she was about six or seven years

Roseann: Sure, yeah.

Janie: When I found out about all of this when we interviewed with you the first time well, I was hesitant, but then I said, well... It's about dad. And our dad was a great man. So, to be acknowledged is a great thing. To write about our dad. And he was one of a kind let me tell you. His life was short but I... didn't know him very long.

Roseann: Well, he was... umm... he died in a car accident in '65, you were born in '48 so you were a young girl when it happened.

Janie: 16 or 17

Norma: I was 10 when he passed.

Ralph: Roxann, my dad, when I was little he said, "Ralph, my dad didn't give me an education, but I want you all to have the education that I didn't have." And I would come from school I remember when I was in the 1st grade he would sit down with me and say, "what is a cow?" ,in English. In Spanish you know vaca and then translate. He would sit down with me ask me things but he would not talk English, but he could understand it and talk to others. But he was afraid that he would say a word that didn't rhyme but he would communicate with the Anglo people that knew English and he knew exactly what they were talking about. When I was 14 years old or 13 I started weighing cotton and then he made me figure out all the [cotton] pounds [picked] of all the workers and I had to sit down, in the afternoon I would add up all the [cotton] pounds and in Friday afternoon I would sit down and translate them to the amount of money. So, I had to learn from school how to do it. I would go to my teacher and say this is what I'm doing, and I want to know how to do it. And then I learned.

Roseann: There you go. [46:40]

Ralph: His main thing was that he wanted to give us an education. And with the girls Dolores is the one that became a teacher of all the siblings and I'm the only one here [with] half a year [of] college and my other brother [Ramon] finish[ed] high school and Roberto a senior and quit half a year before [he] graduated and he became one of the best farmers in the area. [Rodolfo quit school as a junior] My dad liked to farm, and mother was his helper. Mother would know exactly when to tell him when to plant because she [used to] see the Japanese [working] in the area. They would check to find out if the ground [was ready] to plant and she would see them going out to the field like getting the dirt and then they would say now start planting she [remembered that when she was in the fields so] she would tell dad. She didn't help out in the farm she would tell them how to do it. And Roxanne, when we moved over here in this field here, Joe Davis was a ginner, and Gandy was it Gandy, Janie the one that was at First National Bank? Robert Gandy, his dad came to my dad and he wanted to know what university he had gone to school. [My dad told him] I learned from experience.

Roseann: so, you're at your father was a very well respected in the community

Ralph: Oh yes.

Roseann: And you just mention Joe Davis had a cotton Gin.

Ralph: Yes, he was the owner of the Echo hotel.

Professor: Oh, and it's still in business today.

Ralph: I don't know but they built it in the 1960 something or 50s and Joe Davis didn't do it by himself, but he got several farmers investors to buy some shares. My dad had some shares, but he sold them out because he was not getting what he thought he was going to get.

Roseann: And this banker you're talking about Robert Gandy from First National Bank did that particular banker....

Ralph: His dad, he was a manager for Joe Davis, he was the owner of a gin and he finally got over 100 and 200 acres here next to us.

Roseann: Then will the banker though they were they involved in lending a lot of money to farmers to help

Ralph: He lend me when I started farming. You would borrow the money for about six months and you would find a property, we would pay him like Joe Davis would lend us money he was not the bank but he would lend money to certain people because he wanted for us to take our crop to his gin we would take 20 bales and right away he would deduct the first five bales from the money that we borrow and then he would pay us the rest.

Roseann: They would help each other back then

Ralph: Roxanne I remember dad actually say Joe Davis if I need to have \$5,000, he would tell the secretary to [write] the check dad didn't have to go to get it they would bring it to him so he was set.

Roseann: So, we can see why want to you know record the legacy of your father and your mother and your whole family by agreeing to buy agreeing thank you.

Ralph: My dad was such a nice person that [if his] friends [asked him for] corn, he would give them corn. The [corn on the cob] dozen or two dozen if they had carrots they would pick the carrots would let them go [pick them], but now it's different, my brothers they harvest in the right away the next day that it's all gone. My dad was so different because the people were less people in the town, and he knew the people and they would come and get the [corn on the cob].

Roseann: What are roseniers?

Ralph: Corn on the cob see we had planted corn for commercial to become roseniers you pick them for grain but then dad would plant it then he would take loads of it, I was already married I would go to San Antonio and I would sell thousands of dozens so I would stay for a week or two and dad was in the truck so they're full of corn and I was selling to the people lined up and he said I want two dozen some 20 dozen for the commercial and then dad start instead of the corn that was left he would use it, he would get real good money out of it I had forgotten about that he would pick the corn sell it for rosenier and send it over there from the market but they had to be just right [the] restaurants [would] sent people [to buy] 20 or 30 dozen in the stores

Roseann: Yeah, they had to be perfectly ripe in order to use them immediately

Ralph: We would be there in the morning with the trucks, by noon [all the corn would be sold]. The Roegiers would give them more money. [If] then he would leave the corn for feed.

Roseann: You would utilize some Garcias Grain in Val Verde that have

Ralph: Roberto would use the Garcia, the one in Progresso, the co-op, now it's something else, the second was the Edinburg co-op and that co-op was like a community. They call it La Maseca, that was a big company, they sold it, the owners are from Mexico. Now Maseca they contract the corn; they'll say they want 100 acres of corn and they'll buy it all.

Roseann: So, before it was Maseca, it was a co-op, Edinburg co-op, and that co-op was a community organization that assisted all the farmers....

Ralph: And that's where we'd take our crops, like the corn and then my dad would plant a lot of carrots Roxanne and companies would buy it.

Roseann: Mr. Bair used to plant a lot of carrots....

Ralph: 'Cause my dad....my brothers now, Robert plants watermelons, but it's gotten to strict, the water, the people around, the spraying, they don't like it. So, he's sticking to corn and grain.

Roseann: So, with the carrots, were they, because I know they were Valshing [sp?] out of Edcouch Elsa, were the carrots you all were growing were they for canning or were they more for fresh...

Ralph: Fresh...

Rosann: Fresh....ok

Ralph: My dad would make good money out of that.

Juanita: Would they sell them to Othal Brand to?

Ralph: Othal Brand and I forgot the other company but they were in Pharr, dad would have the fields and the buyers would come and say "I'll give you 10k for that field or 5k" and they would sell them and whatever they got was up to them.

Rosann: And you said Othal Brand was the former mayor of McAllen, did he own a co-op?

Norma: Yes on 23rd

Rosanne: What was the name of the co-op?

Ralph: Othal Brand

Rosann: Othal Brand....Co-op (laughs) oh I know where that is on Buddy Owens.

Ralph: The other one, I forgot was somewhere on 281 and Old 83 in Pharr, some big packing sheds there.

Roseann: Yeah...yeah, that's on Cage and Business 83

Ralph: That's all packing sheds. Edinburg didn't have much, Edinburg had packing sheds for tomatoes and they would buy the tomatoes, green tomatoes and sell them.

Roseann: And you guys made tomatoes, you guys grew tomatoes at one point....

Ralph: My dad started with the tomatoes, that's when he started making money. He would buy them and grade them out in the fields. No bad ones, just the real pretty ones, the prettier they were the more money he'd get. Would plant a lot of tomatoes. All our fields would be tomatoes and then after tomatoes would be corn or green beans, and then cotton, we'd plant cotton and corn at the same time, dad would move as the price would, carrots he's get more money, now my brothers they don't like...they don't plant much.

Roseann: But they would plant all year round

Ralph: Yes... Robert planted corn, and he got another crop of corn coming up already. He didn't plant carrots, it's not the time for carrots it's cabbage. Dad did real real good in 1951 with cabbage. That was during WWII.

Roseann: That would've been after WWII in 1951.

Ralph: That was during WWII

Roseann: During WWII....1951 was Korea

Daniel: Oh, yea yea....

Roseann: Yea we'd just eat 'em like an apple, put a little salt on it....my mom used to scoop out the tomato from the inside and make chicken salad....

Ralph: A lot of people would plant the broccoli and okra. They had to go every day and pick it, but then dad never planted it, but he did like to plant cabbage, he did real good with cabbage and tomatoes. Then he would start planting the cotton and carrots. My brothers [plant] corn and grain because they get more money. My brother was planting watermelons, it was too much, the irrigation and the labor, you can't hardly find labor no more. I mean you have to do it yourself.

Roseann: Aren't there 2 types of corn...,one for table corn and one for grain.

Ralph: Yes, like the one HEB sells, the sweet corn.

Norma: Like the combination of the white and yellow.

Roseann: I'm from New Jersey and we do corn and tomatoes in New Jersey.

Ralph: New Jersey, where's that at?

Roseann: New York...the east coast. But there's a lot of farms in New Jersey, people don't know it, but we do a lot of farming.

Ralph: During that time when I was young, I met a lot of people from up state. I had the Freebiles, they all passed away, I used to go visit them...they bought some land here and then they moved back to Amarillo. I remember when I was about 15 years old and they lived next to us and they were a young couple and they had 2 boys and they left and I kept writing them and they said I could go and dad let me go and you know what happened, I had never been out of the Valley...

Roseann: Oh yea, we have the picture of you going on your first vacation in Amarillo.

Ralph: Yes and they asked what trip did you want to go, which way and I took the one to Houston and it took a half a day more, instead taking the short one and I got lost and I didn't know what to do over there and I started panicking in Dallas, I was in Dallas and I had to transfer...From San Antonio, then to Houston and Dallas and they were waiting for me and it was dark over there in Amarillo, finally I got over there and I was so happy. But I went all the way around, but I was getting my, traveling experience. But after that night I didn't want to see

anymore. They became my friends till about 3 years ago and they all passed away, my friends son moved to Kansas and I never heard about him.

Roseann: Well we're all just so thankful that you all decided to participate with us cause the goal of this program is to preserve the history of the region.

Ralph: It's wonderful....

Roseann: And we seem to be kinda a forgotten land down here and a little bit of an island even though we aren't surrounded by water, but we are on the international border, a lot of people say perhaps we are still part of Northern Mexico because we do have a lot of Spanish speaking people and we do like to keep the traditions and they you got a very desolate region between Edinburg and San Antonio, it's not very heavily populated so we seem to be removed and then um, kind of forgotten about and misunderstood in a way and people think life on the border is very dangerous.

Ralph: See Mexico is beautiful to go and visit but we don't go there no more cause it's not the same...it's a beautiful country.

Roseann: But before we get into situations where we can't go back, projects like this with our students and your family, it's very important for us to record the history so people know and understand what life was like, had been like or still is like around here because we have a lot of people, hardworking people and uh...we're very fortunate to be here and very thankful that you all participated in this with us.

Ralph: I hope I was able to help you.

Roseann: Oh, yeah, very much so.

Appendix P

Interviewee: Dora Luna, Ramon Luna, and Roy Luna

Interviewers: Amancio J Chapa IV and Ashly De Leon

Date: October 29, 2018

Location: Dora ad Ramon Luna's home off Schunior and McColl

On October 29, 2018, I, Amancio Jose Chapa Iv and Ashley De Leon interviewed Dora Luna, Ramon Luna, and Roy Luna at their home. My questions were in regard to the family's life throughout the years on the farm; like traditions, the roles they played on the farm, their school life and work life balance. Ashley's questions focused on the relationship with the brazeros and the separation and selling of the original land they had.

Amancio J Chapa IV: We can start off with our names.

Ramon Luna: Ramon Luna, 80.

Dora Luna: Dora Luna, 80.

Roy Luna: Roy Luna, 55 (laughs)

Amancio J Chapa IV: It's okay (laughs) I guess we will start with Ramon Luna, so where were you born?

Ramon Luna: In Edinburg, west of Edinburg.

Amancio J Chapa IV: What about you Dora Luna?

Dora Luna: I was born here in Edinburg, born and raised here.

Amancio J Chapa IV: As well, have you all lived in the valley your entire life?

Dora Luna: Yes.

Ramon Luna: Yes.

Amancio J Chapa IV: So, in living in the valley how do you think that has shaped your, like I guess, family life, the way you were raised and things like that?

Ramon Luna: The way I was raised or what?

Amancio J Chapa IV: She probably got lost like me, so yea like you know being raised in the Valley how do you think that kind of made impression on you? How you have an outlook on certain things, especially coming from an agricultural family how that shaped you versus coming from a city metropolitan area.

Ramon Luna: I'm happy to be here I really enjoyed it, I've been here all my life.

Dora Luna: And then I moved over here, I thought it was the boonies over here, cause it was a wooded area very secluded I thought it was too far away, and now it's open and so many building have been built and everything has been torn down, so it's extremely different.

Amancio J Chapa IV: That is one thing we talked about with aunt Janie, that the rise of residential areas and things like that really impacted the farming for the family, with the separation of the plots and the selling of them which is understandable with how fast the Valley is growing into a metropolitan area, and what about you Roy Luna?

Amancio J Chapa IV: It's good that you're here cause of the fact that you were born and raised during the urbanization of the area, so how do you think that influenced you compared to the other students or your friends that lived in the city?

Roy Luna: I would get out of school and my dad's older brother, my uncle, second oldest Romulo, would be parked at the exit to pick us up.

Amancio J. Chapa: The sisters, how active were they on the farm, no, the women were never on the farm.

Dora Luna: They were the last ones born; they did have chores after school. They were younger, they started just about a little after 1960, that's when we got married and they were about 7-8 years old, they were very young. I drove my mother in law around to the doctor or any errands. Teresa started driving, she was allowed to, and she would take my mother in law to the places she needed to go, and I had started having my family.

Amancio J Chapa IV: This would be more for Ramon Luna and Roy Luna, how were you able to keep the home and work separate, was there any kind of separation between work and the house, like any activities? Or any means of enjoyment?

Ramon Luna: There was no separation.

Roy Luna: Sunup to sundown, work and come home and just relax; dinner, breakfast and get up in the morning. I was growing up, I did have more freedom playing activities and sports, but when there wasn't anything it was work.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Another thing I had asked Janie was your farm for mass production or for the family?

Ramon Luna: It was more for the family.

Amancio J Chapa IV: When they started separating the farm, was there any change in the farming or any drastic change?

Roy Luna: We started renting more property to grow, besides the property they owned we started growing and building in that sense, started a couple hundred acres and then a thousand here and another thousand there, and then we tried to see if we could make more income, cause in the 80s-90s it started to drought really bad.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Especially with the crops and the droughts how did that effect that family? Since it was a family farm?

Ramon Luna: It was stressful that's why I said trying to pick up more land to offset those bills, realizing it now more isn't always better, minimizing sometimes you could produce a lot better crops, back then it was let's see what we can do to pick up more land to make more money to pay for those bills.

Amancio J Chapa IV: When we did the fieldwork, the family came together, and they all talked about work and the farm.

Ashly De Leon: He's gonna continue his questions.

Amancio J Chapa IV: But with my questions, that's a good starting point with the family life, so I know that they said there was separate lodging, how was the interactions between you all?

Ramon Luna: Well I was in school, so I wasn't doing much with the braseros, my brother Romulo who passed away would help my dad, when I got out of school in '58 he had already bought a cotton picker, so we started picking the cotton with the cotton picker. The braseros, he kept about maybe four there during the winter to help with the irrigation.

Ramon Luna: We use to talk to them. We didn't have any problems with them there was always good communication with the hired hands.

Amancio J Chapa IV: so how was maintaining the home life and work life? Like going to school? Any extracurricular activities? Athletics? While working on the farm? 'Cause it seems like there was separation due to school, 'cause you didn't work during that time, but then as you were out you would help out on the farm? So how was it juggling school, work?

Ramon Luna: I wasn't in athletics, no, just work.

Dora Luna: He was a good baseball player. He was a pitcher and he enjoyed baseball, but he had to work.

Amancio J Chapa IV: So how do you feel being able to do extracurricular activities for school compared to having to work on the farm?

Roy Luna: Well it helped me to be more social with other people other than just the family, I wanted to do much more, but it was just sports and then get back to work as soon as it was done.

Amancio J Chapa IV: I guess like versus the extracurricular activities for school, how did any family activities go about, like I know hunting was a big thing they talked about with us, or like family events on the farm down the street?

Ramon Luna: We did a lot of hunting during November, December and January.

Amancio J Chapa IV: I believe it, we found a lot of shotgun shells out there and the fridge with all the shotgun shells (laughs).

Ramon Luna: We enjoyed hunting.

Amancio J Chapa IV: How about yourself (directed to Roy Luna).

Roy Luna: We were raised to work and have fun later, and if we did work we would be off during hunting season, so the quicker it was done we would all get together, his brothers, my uncles, myself, his cousins, their nephews, the sooner we did the more time we had for winter to hunt.

Ramon Luna: They had to do their work first.

Ramon Luna: Work first.

Amancio J Chapa IV: So, I mean with the kind of the importance of working on the farm did you all have any chance to do communal activities, like any kind of church you all went to? get involved with the community of Edinburg?

Dora Luna: Well, it was mass first thing in the morning on Sundays, then for the rest of the week, work and school and everything else, there was the karmes once a year. We would go help with the setting up of stands for the karmes and helped with baking for the cake walk. We helped with the fishing booth and the cane stick booth.

Ramon Luna: I was a knight of Columbus.

Roy Luna: It was more family related religion, of going to church, when we planted [on] Sundays, regardless, if it had to be done. Now a days it is pretty much every day you work, but back then it was strictly Monday through Saturday and Sunday was used to worship God. The holy week we would work to make sure we were caught up and be off that holy week and then get back right after that. Special occasions we would be off. But we definitely worked harder.

Amancio J Chapa IV: You play to win.

Amancio J Chapa IV: The years have progressed and different generations have come in, how has focusing on the farm changed, like for instance your ability to play baseball and your father who wasn't able to, how do you think that's changed and or will changed as time progresses?

Roy Luna: I mean it's changed quite a bit, back then it seemed like the closest place or closest friends I had were in town 4-5 miles away. So, it just seems like you did what you were supposed to be doing, where in town you were able to mingle with somebodies' else neighbor,

your age or so, and did other things. I think it helped me, I think I'm better off, it could have been the other way around, it didn't turn out that way, but I think I'm better off than a lot of my friends. They didn't get into the workforce or look into their future. I guess they were too busy just enjoying the moment.

Dora Luna: My husband's parents, I think got married when they were 18-19, and my parents got married when they were 16. It was more, farming was more in demand, and it was more demanding, 'cause they had so much land to work, and they worked from sunrise to sundown.

Dora Luna: These tractors have lights and everything so he could work late, and at that time they didn't so they had to really cram it up and they kept getting land and land and renting. I was a lot of pressure to get it all done.

Ramon Luna: Those tractors didn't have lights now they have lights.

Dora Luna: They didn't have lights or air condition or GPS, and now it does the planting itself, that's how they do it, they have it programmed. He still wants to get in his tractor and do it, but its not as easy for him.

Ramon Luna: I liked to help.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Would you say being raised on a family farm, really installed different values of hard work and family values versus being raised in a different setting.

Roy Luna: Yes, matured lot faster in life. Hard earn money was, to win it or lose it, those were the values instill.

Amancio J Chapa IV: That's what it seems like, how close your family is, working together really helped with that.

Ramon Luna: Yea, it really helped, staying together, we got what we got.

Ramon Luna: It's getting harder, you're dealing with the 6 brother and 4 sisters, you know, that's one family and then each one starts having their own family, as long as the original Luna brothers, which was them, split up, everyone started branching out and having their own family. We grew up in that, but at the same time hard times came up and you start struggling and its hard. Everyone goes their different directions. That's where it leads us to now, but sill everybody that farms and those values are still there.

Ramon Luna: It was nice being together 'cause somebody got sick you had somebody who could take over.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah.

Ramon Luna: Yeah.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah, you got a good little workforce.

Dora Luna: Yes.

Ramon Luna: Yeah.

Ramon Luna: Yes, like my brother and me. My brother helps me.

Amancio J Chapa IV: ah (Everyone laughs)

Amancio J Chapa IV: I know. I was telling her.

Little boy: You're talking about my dad. (Laughter)

Amancio J Chapa IV: Okay so did you all like any like little basic questions but did you all have any folk tales or anything like that like any traditional like um stories or Mexican stories like that like La Llorona or the Chupacabra or anything to scare each other. (Laughter)

Ramon Luna: no. no. no.

Dora Luna: We had to be up very early because his father Mr. Luna would pass by and honk.

Dora Luna: In the morning fixing breakfast so when his dad passed by he was already having breakfast and he was ready to go to work.

Ramon Luna: I had to wake up at five every morning, since then I still get up at the same time.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Oh no

Ramon Luna: I'm used to it.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Wow.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Laughing

Ramon Luna: When five comes around I'm awake and I can't go back to sleep.

Amancio J Chapa IV: You're awake.

Dora Luna: His dad would pass by and he knew the time. Sitting up and the light was on. His dad had to see that he was sitting up and it meant a lot to him.

Ramon Luna: He would get up real early and go into town and drink coffee and then come back.

Ramon Luna: You had to get up early so we can catch the bus because pick up was at six thirty.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Wow.

Ramon Luna: If you didn't make it.

Amancio J Chapa IV: You didn't make it.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Laughs

Ramon Luna: You had to work all day.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Oh wow.

Ramon Luna: They wouldn't take us to school.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Laughs

Amancio J Chapa IV: Wow.

Ramon Luna: You would stay on the farm and work.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Wow okay was it more of a punishment or just like okay this is what's gonna happen? (Laughter)

Ramon Luna: Learn to get up early and just go to school.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah

Amancio J Chapa IV: Oh okay and I guess for my last question would just be, like how do you feel that the importance of the farm and the values, that I guess were installed in you Ramon Luna and you Roy Luna were gonna go on for future generations? For like the family.

Roy Luna: I think that was a deep part of my bringing up individually and as a family. Working hard to achieve a better life and it's been great; I had the opportunity to go to university.

Roy Luna: I'm grateful for it.

Ramon Luna: Right after school you went to work for the government, right?

Roy Luna: Yeah, I did.

Ramon Luna: As an adjuster.

Roy Luna: I signed up and went to college, but I dropped out immediately. I was working here at the farm and going to school and they came to offer me a job.....

Amancio J Chapa IV: Wow

Roy Luna:for the Federal government and he said no, that his farming was his life. You said my son can do it you know he says he's been farming his whole life and he goes if you want somebody you can take him. So, they signed me on and became a federal agent with the government in agriculture I went over there but I always had my foot over here (laughs) and I was out of there.

Amancio J Chapa IV: You got stuck on that crossroads like here and there.

Dora Luna: He wouldn't close the door to farming.

Amancio J Chapa IV. Awe

Roy Luna: They said, "you can't do both", you got your life [and] kept going back so I finally left it, came back over here and now I've gone back. So, I do both, you see I proved them wrong. (Everyone laughs)

Roy Luna: I can do both but let me tell you it came at a price you can't get out unless you're right. It's hard.

Roy Luna: It's hard but uh it's in my blood and I will always do it regardless.

Ramon Luna: Farming is hard but if you do it right, you like it.

Amancio J Chapa IV: It stays with you.

Roy Luna: You get experience.

Ramon Luna: Helped me out.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Awe that's awesome.

Ashly De Leon: Awe

Roy Luna: I raise my son the same way. He rode with me on the tractor and stuff, but I didn't push him as much and I wouldn't say I wasn't pushed, I was guided in that direction and so I wanted him to get an education.

Roy Luna: My kids did good.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Well that's my portion let me stop that recording, so Ashly can start hers.

Ashly De Leon: What were some of the factors that made your father want to come to this country?

Ramon Luna: I really don't know, because they used to live in north of la Joya

Ashly De Leon: Oh.

Ramon Luna: My grandfather sold all he had, and he went back to Mexico. So, I really don't know, I was not even born yet. (Laughs)

Ramon Luna: They came back, crossed over here and he used to live there on Freddy Gonzalez. We had a home there, that's where he started.

Ashly De Leon: Oh wow.

Ramon Luna: I don't know why he left here and went back.

Ashly De Leon: Well then how many braceros did your family employ? We had talked about that before.

Ramon Luna: What I know is that he had maybe thirty during the summer during cotton season. But I was in school then, but my brother that passed away was taking care of that with my dad and during the winter he would choose about four of them that would know how to irrigate and clean carrots or something and he would keep them here for a few months. They had a certain amount of months... three or four months.

Ashly De Leon: While the braceros were here did any of them stand out, did you get close to any of them or like in those four months that it was just four braceros?

Ramon Luna: We were close.

Ashly De Leon: Yeah, you don't have any stories about them nah just?

Ramon Luna: No, they would work all week and they get paid and then we would go and get them money order and send their money back to their family.

Ashly De Leon: When you were in school was it mostly English or could you talk Spanish, or would you get in trouble for talking Spanish?

Ramon Luna: We would get in trouble if we spoke Spanish.

Ashly De Leon: Yeah get in trouble.

Ramon Luna: English. (Laughs)

Ashly De Leon: Yeah

Dora Luna: No, not even outside were you allowed to speak Spanish.

Ramon Luna: If they would catch you, they would get after you.

Ashly De Leon: It's very different for nowadays.

Ramon Luna: Yes, now you need to speak both languages, my grandson was trying to get work and they wouldn't give him work because he didn't speak Spanish and he doesn't speak Spanish.

Ashly De Leon: How do you feel about that, like when you were in school you couldn't speak Spanish, but now in school they want you to learn Spanish so it's kind of like a different era and a different?

Ramon Luna: Yeah you have to learn both.

Ashly De Leon: Yeah.

Ramon Luna: It was hard for us because our dad and mom didn't speak English, we had to speak Spanish at home and English in school.

Ashly De Leon: Do you remember when your father purchased the land or the first the land over there?

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah

Ramon Luna: This one here?

Ashly De Leon: Sorry this land here this one here.

Ramon Luna: It was 1945 we used to live on Freddy Gonzalez the water district would let them build their homes there and then he started over there then he bought land. In 1945 we move here because he bought eighty acres for eight thousand dollars.

Amancio J Chapa IV: That sounds like a lot, but it wasn't.

Ramon Luna: During the World War two he had ten acres of tomatoes I think he made money so that's when he bought over here.

Amancio J Chapa IV: That's awesome

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah that's why I was like it seems like a lot, but it really isn't compare to today like now it's like the land.

Amancio J Chapa IV: It's so expensive.

Ramon Luna: Dad bought it here and we all stayed here.

Ashly De Leon: (laughing) How do you feel selling your land like off like did it kind of like was it little bit sentimental or were you just like you had to do it so you had to like sell it?

Ramon Luna: Well I didn't sell all of it. I sold 40 acres in 1997 because I needed the money, I didn't want to sell it, but they gave me a good price.

Dora Luna: It was kind of sad to sell where Peter Piper pizza is at that was land that was his father's.

Ramon Luna: It belonged to my father.

Ashly De Leon: Um what?

Ramon Luna: It was those forty acres that they had to be sold.

Ramon Luna: They had to be sold they divided among brothers and sisters.

Ashly De Leon: Oh.

Roy Luna: All the other property had been divided to each individual.

Ramon Luna: My mom gave me twenty acres here and everybody got twenty acres in those forty it was four acres.

Ramon Luna: It was ten of us, four acres.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Oh.

Roy Luna: So, if they wanted to sell everybody had to agree to sell.

Ashly De Leon: Yeah, I would think.

Ashly De Leon: Yeah because that used to be your land.

Ramon Luna: Yes, exactly.

Ashly De Leon: How was those talks since you just mentioned that you to everybody had to agreement like what was it like a big family thing to talk about when you were selling it or was it just everybody knew that people.

Ramon Luna: Ralph my older brother took care of it and we all agreed.

Ashly De Leon: I know your neighbors are far but once you settle here like did you see like how did your neighbors perceive you?

Ramon Luna: There were no neighbors back then.

Ashly De Leon: Like there were no neighbors?

Ramon Luna: We were the first ones here. There was a Mr. Hoehn that used to live right in the corner.

Ramon Luna: He was our neighbor. (Laughter)

Ramon Luna: He was from Kansas.

Ramon Luna: He was here from Kansas they came over and he had orchards

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah.

Ashly De Leon: Oh, okay like to remise.

(Background: phone ringing. Call from phone ringing)

Ramon Luna: Tere my older sister had a chance to buy, she was in Chicago and it was ten acres left there with a house he wanted ten thousand dollars for it.

Ashly De Leon: Oh

Ramon Luna: He was a good friend of ours. We thought he lived in town, we told him if he wanted it and he sold his house over there and bought over here.

Ashly De Leon: Do you know how much they sold it for or just?

Ramon Luna: Ten thousand dollars.

Ashly De Leon: Oh wow.

Ramon Luna: Ten acre and the house.

Ashly De Leon: That's nice.

Ramon Luna: in the 60's.

Ashly De Leon: in the 60's not bad.

Ashly De Leon: We all heard of the Stetson story, how your father paid back the property in one year. Can you give your version of the story?

Ramon Luna: The property?

Roy Luna: The hat.

Ashly De Leon: The Stetson hat.

Ramon Luna: the Stetson hat.

Dora Luna: The one that got stolen.

Amancio J Chapa IV: (gasp) How?

Dora Luna: It was his and well his dad, I guess. He was the only one that had the size of his dad's head.

Ashly De Leon: Awe.

Ramon Luna: We were about the same size and it would fit me.

Dora Luna: He had his clothes and everything, he inherited because everything fit him.

Ramon Luna: He had his clothes.

Ashly De Leon: awe (Laughter)

Dora Luna: So, he was the lucky one and he got the Stetson hat.

Ramon Luna: I got it.

Dora Luna: He got his hat in here in one of the pictures.

Ramon Luna: I had it for thirty – three years.

Ramon Luna: Then they got in the house here and stole it.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Oh no.

Dora Luna: They stole a lot of things from here but that was mainly what really hurt a lot, because it was his dad's.

Ramon Luna: That's the only thing. It was a good Stetson hat; it was worth a lot of money.

Ashly De Leon: So, you have heard of the story what's your version?

Dora Luna: That was when they went hunting (hunting pictures)

Dora Luna: This was the house that he built us when we got married.

Dora Luna: He had racing horses. This is one of the horses that won. (Laughter)

Ashly De Leon: Oh

Dora Luna: That was his famous hat.

Ramon Luna: This is his tractor, that's his tractor now.

Amancio J Chapa IV: The GPS.

Ramon Luna: Yeah

Dora Luna: See and here some pigs that they slaughtered to make chicharons.

Ramon Luna: We used to kill a pig every Christmas.

Ashly De Leon: Wow.

Roy Luna: That one has some sentimental value for me.

Ashly De Leon: Really?

Roy Luna: I raised that one.

Ashly De Leon: You raised this one?

Roy Luna: There was one that your tio or somebody. We went and we picked it up and we brought it over here and I raise it.

Ramon Luna: We used to raise the pig every Christmas, we fed them up and kill them and made chicharrons.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Ham hmm... that sounds good.

Dora Luna: The house, his mother's house (pictures)

Ramon Luna: the old house.

Ramon Luna: Tat was the one we were raisde in.

Ramon Luna: Yes, we had the house over there.

Ramon Luna: Dad didn't like it because during the winter we had to walk all the way back here to get the bus, so he moved it over here in that corner.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah.

Ramon Luna: No, he moved it.

Amancio J Chapa IV: No, they moved it.

Ramon Luna: that thing is maybe a year back here?

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah cause on Monday.

Ramon Luna: It was a nice place because but then a so you have to walk every rainy day.

Ramon Luna: There was a lot of...

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah.

Roy Luna: Where there is a big or huge canal over there.

Ramon Luna: That main canal.

Ramon Luna: That was the main canal, there was water and knowing that's where they camped out

Ramon Luna: That's why they built it over there because there is a pipe.

Amancio J Chapa IV: oh okay.

Ramon Luna: Then he moved the house over here and then he paid for some pipes to go through so he could get some water.

Ashly De Leon: Do you have any like land title?

Ramon Luna: Not anymore.

Ashly De Leon: did you say that it was around the eighties that you started selling land is that correct or around what like in what time did you start selling the land?

Ramon Luna: Well my land.

Ashly De Leon: No, not your land but the forty acres.

Ramon Luna: Choose the late late nineties, I guess 1996.

Ashly De Leon: The late eighties okay.

Ramon Luna: forty acres on Jackson Rd.

Ramon Luna: it was in the late nineties, I guess that we sold it.

Ramon Luna: Goes by.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Oh wow.

Ramon Luna: [The high school] was gonna be where south middle school is the golf course that's where they build that's where they graduated from.

Amancio J Chapa IV: yeah

Ashly De Leon: oh

Ramon Luna: That's where I don't remember what year that was?

Roy Luna: Seventy-nine, eighty, uh one day they made the offer here.

Ramon Luna: Yeah.

Ramon Luna: No, well they didn't want it, they didn't want it.

Ramon Luna: They had some other offers, so they took them.

Ashly De Leon: So, the high school would have been on your land?

Ramon Luna: Yeah

Ashly De Leon: Yeah, that's wow.

Roy Luna: They wanted too much.

Ashly De Leon: They could have graduated off their own land

Roy Luna: Politics.

Ashly De Leon: I'm sorry that would be so sentimental, right?

Ramon Luna: Maybe it was too close to the other one so maybe that's what why they didn't.

Ashly De Leon: Maybe.

Ramon Luna: So, they could divide the students, because now they built the other one on [Canton] and then they got the other one. (Laughs)

Amancio J Chapa IV: I know

Amancio J Chapa IV: I know, but like la Joya they barley started to not like barley.

Ramon Luna: Yeah

Amancio J Chapa IV: Five years ago, so they started to divide all the schools 'cause it was too much for la Joya high school.

Amancio J Chapa IV: So now there is like high schools everywhere.

Ramon Luna: That is one of the biggest schools.

Amancio J Chapa IV: They go all the way to Penitas if I'm not mistaken or something like that

Ramon Luna: It's like Edinburg high, it goes all the way to...

Amancio J Chapa IV: To Monte Cristo out there.

Ramon Luna: No way back in Mc Cook.

Amancio J Chapa IV: What? Wow

Roy Luna: All the way to Mc Cook and all the way to San Manuel.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Wow

Roy Luna: That's their boundaries, so...

Dora Luna: Yeah Edinburg high school had classes in Mc Cook and they had buses. We had teachers go and teach over there and ceramic classes too in the in the little schools over there by Mc Cook I said oh my God that's a long drive a very long drive.

Ashly De Leon: Yeah

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah.

Ramon Luna: The children they had over there, they came, and they graduated and came to town, so they had to close the schools.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Yeah.

Ashly De Leon: What was your highest level of um education?

Ramon Luna: Twelve.

Ashly De Leon: oh wow

Dora Luna: I worked until I got married. (Laughter)

Ramon Luna: We had a drive in.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Oh

Ramon Luna: Right, where Wal-Mart is.

Amancio J Chapa IV: That's right yeah.

Ramon Luna: And then there was another one on the other side of town.

Amancio J Chapa IV: I know the only one that is open is the one in Mercedes.

Ramon Luna: Mercedes.

Ashly De Leon: Weslaco.

Amancio J Chapa IV: Wesmer something like that.

Amancio J Chapa IV: and I think it is that one oh yeah Weslaco-Mercedes.

Amancio J Chapa IV: I remember the one in Edinburg because when I was a kid my dad would take us.

Ashly De Leon: It was cool. (Laughter)

Ashly De Leon: Growing up in the school was there any set segregation if there was no?

Ramon Luna: No.

Ashly De Leon: No.

Ramon Luna: We didn't have any fights.

Appendix Q

Interviewee: Roberto Luna & Bobby Luna

Interviewers: Mark Sifuentes & Evelyn Cantu

Date: October 28, 2018

Location: Roberto Luna's property on Schunior Rd.

We interviewed Roberto and Bobby Luna on the topic of Biology in the farm, the population of animals seen throughout time, and on the topic of Family Life. We discussed how chores changed over time with running water and electricity. Hunting over time, education and relationship with the church, town life and entertainment, folklore and medical systems.

Mark Sifuentes: Today is Sunday October...

Roberto Luna: The 28th 2018

Mark Sifuentes: 28, 2018 it is 1:20 we are at... whose home is this?

Roberto Luna: Roberto Luna

Mark Sifuentes: Roberto Luna's home?

Roberto Luna: Luna brothers

Mark Sifuentes: Luna Brother's home in Edinburg Tx. Roberto Luna is present and Bobby Luna, right?

Roberto Luna: Yes

Bobby Luna: Right

Mark Sifuentes: And then Evelyn

Evelyn Cantu: Evelyn Cantu

Mark Sifuentes: and Mark

Mark Sifuentes: So, I can ask my questions first

Evelyn Cantu: Yes

Mark Sifuentes: So, my first question would be, have you seen any different wild animals.

Roberto Luna: No

Mark Sifuentes: When you were younger?

Roberto Luna: There still around but, not as much as they used to be

Mark Sifuentes: Not as much as there used to be?

Bobby Luna: There used to be a lot of jack rabbits

Mark Sifuentes: Jack rabbits?

Bobby Luna: Like around here in this area

Robert Luna: Little rabbits

Bobby Luna: They started building homes.

Roberto Luna: You see bunny rabbits but not many.

Mark Sifuentes: As you used to?

Roberto Luna: Too many subdivisions.

Mark Sifuentes: Now, cause it's cutting them off?

Roberto Luna: Yes

Bobby Luna: Regular possums, the dogs were out here remember when it was Friday night they had a possum right in the track. Greyhounds?

Mark Sifuentes: Do they hunt them down?

Bobby Luna: Yes, they hunted them down by the time I went and got a stick and they came with me he got away so

Bobby Luna: Next time

Roberto Luna: The possum like to eat lots of oranges

Bobby Luna: Yes, the grapefruits also

Mark Sifuentes: Oh

Roberto Luna: When fruit falls down on the ground, they like to eat it

Mark Sifuentes: They eat them

Roberto Luna: We used to see a lot of raccoons on the road passing

Mark Sifuentes: Not anymore

Roberto Luna: But you don't see them a lot but there are some

Mark Sifuentes: Not as many as there were

Roberto Luna: No because cars would kill them

Mark Sifuentes: Roadkill

Roberto Luna: Probably ran over them at night

Mark Sifuentes: Yes

(Roosters begin to crow in background)

Roberto Luna: It just got more difficult for farming because to transport your equipment, there is too much traffic, you know like this equipment we have now it has gotten bigger than before. Now we try to move equipment on a Sunday.

Mark Sifuentes: Mhmm

Roberto Luna: Because people are watching football and it's family day.

Mark Sifuentes: (Laughs) Yes

Roberto Luna: That's when we take off, or next day

Bobby Luna: Right now, we're harvesting trying to get it done. The cars don't want to move out of the way (Laughs)

Mark Sifuentes: Really?

Roberto Luna: Sometimes you don't want to get off the road. Because if you go all the way you might flip.

Mark Sifuentes: You'll tilt it

Bobby Luna: Yes

Roberto Luna: It's too heavy.

Mark Sifuentes: Yes

Roberto Luna: The tires you might run over a bottle of glass, and the glass will stick on the side of tire. Are Radial and have ply's. So the glass will cut through.

Bobby Luna: Yes

Mark Sifuentes: How far do you have to drive this?

Roberto Luna: 25 -30 miles is the farthest we go, Once a year to McCook

Mark Sifuentes: It's all here?

Roberto Luna: Yes

Bobby Luna: Well it depends I mean if there's, like a wet spot you're gonna have to go back every now and then I mean. It all depends on the year it varies but it's usually just once

Mark Sifuentes: What was the first crop that was planted?

Roberto Luna: Tomatoes

Roberto Luna: My father planted tomatoes and cotton.

Roberto Luna: It depended on the market demands at that time and cost of production.

Mark Sifuentes: Yes

Roberto Luna: Cotton and tomatoes were the most popular in the 50s. 40s and 60s.

Mark Sifuentes: Citrus, too right?

Roberto Luna: Yes, and this time, they used to plant a lot of vegetables, carrots, bell pepper, cabbage. Now you don't because you have to put pesticides on it

Mark Sifuentes: Mhmm, it just kills it

Roberto Luna: The thing is you can put pesticides, if somebody gets sick right away, they wanna sue.

Mark Sifuentes: They blame you

Roberto Luna: Yes

Mark Sifuentes: Yes

Roberto Luna: You might as well not take a chance

Mark Sifuentes: Yes

Mark Sifuentes: Yes, they'll still do it

Roberto Luna: When you go buy the chemical. They ask you where are you gonna put it. They tell you no you can't you gotta buy something else. They'll tell you what to put on the crop.

Mark Sifuentes: Mhmm

Roberto Luna: But not the good stuff.

Roberto Luna: You probably have to go 2, 3 more times with that other kind instead of going one time.

Roberto Luna: If you're sick, on the 40s 50s 60s and 70s and probably in the middle of 80s the airplanes used to come out and spray early when people are still inside.

Mark Sifuentes: Oh

Roberto Luna: Crop dusters

Mark Sifuentes: Crop-dusters?

Roberto Luna: Now they cannot go around here. They can fly straight

Mark Sifuentes: Mhmm

Mark Sifuentes: Here yeah because there's too many houses I know, 'cause I was driving to the island I saw a crop duster

Robert Luna: Oh, yea over there yea, on the river

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Bobby Luna: Where there's not too many houses

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Bobby Luna: Still rural

Mark Sifuentes: What about livestock?

Roberto Luna: There were mostly cows, pigs, goats, and chickens.

Mark Sifuentes: That was in what year?

Roberto Luna: 40s and 50s that was about it what they have because at that time nobody had a freezer in the 40's and 50's they did not have freezers.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: My dad used to kill a pig on Christmas day, and another pig on New Year's Eve. My uncle would come by and take a piece of meat of everything. Its gonna spoil usually did it for the lard.

Mark Sifuentes: For the lard

Roberto Luna: They put it in a Fifty-five-gallon drum. Take it inside and leave it there, my mom used it to cook and it was good

Mark Sifuentes: So, her cooking oil? It was lard?

Roberto Luna: My mom didn't have any recipes They tell you put a teaspoon of this teaspoon of that My mom would measure by using her hand and fingers.

Mark Sifuentes: laughs

Roberto Luna: Her meals would taste the same without measuring every time.

Bobby Luna: (Laughs) There were no McDonalds, pizza places.

Bobby and Mark: (At same time) none of that!

Mark Sifuentes: It was all homemade

Bobby Luna: No Whataburger!

Bobby Luna: Your gonna eat it or not

Evelyn Cantu: Laughs

Mark Sifuentes: Or yeah

Bobby Luna: Go to sleep without food

Mark Sifuentes: You're sleeping hungry. The next question would be, how was like the surrounding urbanization or how has everyone's buildings houses like, has it caused wildlife to be less.

Roberto Luna: Oh, it's less and less

Roberto Luna: 'Cause they won't let you shoot here anymore. It's city limits, even if you live here. If somebody shoots somebody cause out there they come and check, hey you not supposed to shoot. They give you a warning or whatever but like here they're my brothers...and my sons and everybody here my aunt, my sister, it's family mostly you don't get any complaints.

Mark Sifuentes: Complaints

Roberto Luna: The one that's gonna get calls are back over there, the ones that shoot too, you know.

Mark Sifuentes: (laughs) they shoot too

Roberto Luna: So as long as you don't complain, and everybody knows that there's houses you don't shoot that way. You shoot that way (Points at the opposite direction from the houses) because sometimes they shoot from way over there and they shoot it and a little while later you hear the little pellets hit the roofs.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: It's bad because if you look up one of those pellets comes out and hits you in the eye you can lose your eye. It won't kill you, but you'll probably lose your eye

Mark Sifuentes: You'll end up wearing an eyepatch.

Roberto Luna: Yeah, if you have glasses it's alright.

Mark Sifuentes: And then how you said you can't apply pesticides anymore because a lot of people—

Roberto Luna: The subdivisions.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah that was my last question about how the pesticides can't be applied because of all the subdivisions.

Roberto Luna: In the 40's and 50's ----

Mark Sifuentes: You were able to?

Roberto Luna: Yes, we were able to, because that was when we planted cotton a lot of cotton that's what we planted more. So, we used to spray open everything open we used to get DEET--- That we just put it in there no masks no nothing you had nothing, and you would just spray it. On cabbage mostly everybody you're probably going to spray them a lot from 12-15 times.

Mark Sifuentes: Really?

Roberto Luna: About a cabbage that big and they started throwing the little leaves so that they go down then here comes another one---

Mark Sifuentes: So, you have to keep on applying?

Roberto Luna: Yes, for each layer---

Bobby Luna: All those layers

Roberto Luna: Each layer you have to put it on then it covers it again.

Mark Sifuentes: So how often would you spray?

Roberto Luna: At least once a week.

Mark Sifuentes: Did you have to change pesticides?

Roberto Luna: No, that was all we had. Yes, later like now they have different DEET was taken out.

Mark Sifuentes: Hmm

Roberto Luna: They said it was bad because people were getting sick or get poisoned because when you go get something like that and you have a cut you get the pesticide on it.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: But if you do it right even if you put it on your bare hands it won't do anything if you go and smell it people like to do that but you shouldn't do that, If you do get chemical inside you wash and clean it. Right away.

Mark Sifuentes: For years?

Roberto Luna: Years and years. We used to spray the cotton 10-12 times. There were a lot of boll weevils and we used to do that.

Evelynn Cantu: What would you guys use to spray them?

Roberto Luna: At that time at first my dad made a barrel like and put a little door on top and there's a PTO that you put dust on a bag of dust like flour. They used to call that dust seven it was poison it was bad, but you put that dust in the belt with the PTO how they make cement?

Mark Sifuentes: Oh yeah

Roberto Luna: You go in the tractor and you open the can throw it and you do 6 rows at a time, and you had to put that when you had a lot of dew on the leaves so the dust could stick to it.

Mark Sifuentes: stick to it?

Roberto Luna: If it's dry it won't do anything it goes down. What you had to do you needed a lot of dew so that the dust can stick to the leaves.

Bobby Luna: Yes

Evelynn Cantu: So, in the mornings?

Roberto Luna: In the morning or very late you had to do it we had to do it between maybe 3 o'clock in the morning maybe 8 o'clock in the morning because the dew would stay for that long and if you got a lot of wind you won't be able to because it blows it all away... We used to do that for years and years.

Bobby Luna: Now we use a sprayer like the one that's back there.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: We use the big one over there.

Evalyn Cantu: Do you remember what year your family first had running water was it the 40's...

Roberto Luna: Running water.... Probably in the 50's

Evelyn Cantu: The 50's.

Roberto Luna: The 50's that's when we got the running water.

Bobby Luna: One of those wells, it was like a well?

Roberto Luna: Yes ('but' in Spanish) it was... They built it with cement and you go get water to put it in there and then my dad put one of those water pumps.

Mark Sifuentes: Oh yea

Roberto Luna: In the sink and that's when we had the water and then my dad made a well and we put a motor there and that's when the house got running water it was probably in the 50 something... 55, 56.

Evelyn Cantu: Was this around the same time you'll stopped also the out houses?

Roberto Luna: Yes, we started inside with bathrooms

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember the first year that your family first had electricity?

Roberto Luna: What?

Evelyn Cantu: Electricity.

Roberto Luna: Probably.... Between 1921—No mas patras ('no more back' in Spanish) probably in the 1950's yeah.

Bobby Luna: Yes, because it was probably the first house

Roberto Luna w/ Bobby Luna: Yeah

Evelyn Cantu: How was that day when you all...

Roberto Luna: Everybody wanted to turn it on, and my mom and my dad would come and say "Hey turn the light off!" (Laughs) My dad had to pay the electricity and it was another bill, but it wasn't much at that time it was 5 dollars a month

Mark Sifuentes: It was a lot

Roberto Luna: It was a lot 5 dollars a month you could buy a lot of other things

Mark Sifuentes: Mhmm

Bobby Luna: Five dollars a month is probably like 100 dollars' now

Mark Sifuentes: How many rows does that one do?

Roberto Luna: Rows?

Bobby Luna: that's 90 feet

Roberto Luna: 90 feet across so from up there to this post is 60 feet so that's how much it covers 90 feet, and you'll be going about 8-10 mph.

Bobby Luna: Each tank you cover about 100 acres.

Roberto Luna: You do 100 acres with 1 tank with 800 gallons.

Mark Sifuentes: That's a lot

Roberto Luna: It costs a lot to put. This has a lot of little plastic things that wear out but it's mostly plastic.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah. So, you would have to replace it?

Roberto Luna: Yes

Mark Sifuentes: How often would you have to replace the equipment?

Roberto Luna: If you don't wash it then the chemical would eat it away

Bobby Luna: It'll start to rust.

Roberto Luna: Yes, rust.

Bobby Luna: The steel everything whatever it'll start to rust?

Mark Sifuentes: Okay

Evelyn Cantu: When you would do laundry or dishes before there was running water? How would you all shower? How would you all get the water?

Roberto Luna: What we didn't have we had to go bring in barrels and my mom would get water for the dishes and in the tub, she would use a washboard.

Roberto Luna: She used the washboard and hang the clothes, outside. To take a bath we used its cold we heat the water and put it in the tub to take a shower.

Evelyn Cantu: Okay

Roberto Luna: For the Bathroom we had out houses. We didn't get bathrooms until the 50's.

Roberto Luna: No, that one you had to go outside and there was a canal in the back of it we used to take a bath there, but my mom would use it to wash clothes.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: When we moved over here on Schunior road then we had to do that.

Roberto Luna: The hut was made of palm [and carrizo] leaves?

Mark Sifuentes: Oh, yea yea yea

Roberto Luna: Yes

Mark Sifuentes: Thatch?

Roberto Luna: The water would not seep through it or anything.

Bobby Luna: It will not seep through it.

Roberto Luna: They call them Carrizo's they grow really tall.

Bobby Luna: Like sugar cane they grow very tall.

Roberto Luna: You cut them and they put them up

and they tie them up all around and then we would get water and dirt then we'd get some grass and we mixed it with grass and we just plastered it.

Bobby Luna: Like stuck them together

Mark Sifuentes: Yes

Roberto Luna: They put it like that.

Bobby Luna: That was the insulation it was like an insulation, right?

Roberto Luna: The floors were dirt floors there was no wood floors. My mom in the morning would throw water, then sweep it was really wet, you could slide in there.

Mark Sifuentes: (laughs)

Roberto Luna: The reason was because there's a lot of wind the dust [and it] won't be flying around when she [was] making food.

Evelyn Cantu: This was the first home that you all had.

Roberto Luna: The first one was in the 40's... And this house that I showed you there my dad made it in 1946-47, because he bought it used and he put it over there. Then in 1960-59 we moved it here—no in the early 50's we brought it over here and put it right there – that old house that's in the picture and then in 1959 they removed that old house then put that one. That was built in 1960.

Mark Sifuentes: And you owned all the properties, too, right?

Roberto Luna: Yes, right here, but now it's less because my brother has a piece my aunt—my dad—

Bobby Luna: It all got divided

Roberto Luna: My dad when he died, he left us with 240 acres.

Mark Sifuentes: So, you guys had to divide it?

Roberto Luna: Yes, then we got 24 acres a piece.

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember what year your family first had running water was it the 40's...

Roberto Luna: I think it [gasoline] was 12 cents

Bobby Luna: (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: You put a dollar and went a long way

Mark Sifuentes: (laughs) It's a full tank

Roberto Luna: When you put a dollar it's a lot of money. They used to give me 25 cents when I was picking cotton my dad would take all the money and he'd give me 25 cents to go to the movies Saturday and Sunday. You go inside buy your ticket and you buy a little bag of popcorn and a coke and go inside.

Evelyn Cantu: Where was this movie theater?

Roberto Luna: Over there in Edinburg

Evelyn Cantu: In Edinburg?

Roberto Luna: Yes... it was where the citrus is or where the courthouse is.

Evelyn Cantu: Yea

Roberto Luna: Okay it was the citrus theater the Azteca, Juarez and Alameda I think there were 4 theaters.

Evelyn Cantu: They would just let you guys go by yourselves?

Roberto Luna: Well, when we were small, we used to – My mom used to go but when we got to the age of 10 years my brother would take us and put us in there but there were all kids there. Actually, it was a movie like western movies like Roy Rogers, Hopalong Cassidy and lot, of good movies you would see no movies like that now.

Bobby Luna: No sex, no bad words none of that (laughs)

Roberto Luna: Nothing like that

Evelyn Cantu: That was actually – I know once the electricity started to come in you all would listen a lot to the radio or different radio programs?

Roberto Luna: Yes

Evelyn Cantu: Were the any radio programs that your parents wouldn't let you listen to like back then were there programs that okay we can't let the kids listen to.

Roberto Luna: Nobody would say a bad word, or they'll shut it off. Now they say bad words all the time.

Bobby Luna: It's in every other sentence

Evelyn Cantu: Was there any music that you or your family that weren't allowed to listen to?

Roberto Luna: No, music it was mostly Spanish but my mom and my dad that's what she didn't know how to write English. She knew how to write her name, but she knew how to read in Spanish but not English she could not talk English. My dad, Mexican music and that was it, no English music. We did when in school a lot of like Elvis Presley came out and there was good music, not like right now. When you went out dancing you go out there dancing to slow music now you go out there you don't know who's your partner because back in that time it was quiet music slow.

Evelyn Cantu: Tranquilo ('calm' in Spanish) (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: *Tranquilo* ('calm' in Spanish) everything.

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember the first time your family got the telephone? And how did they operate at first, I know they were very different from what we're used to

Roberto Luna: The first telephone it must have been mid 50's—my dad passed in 1965 and we didn't have a phone my brother did, but we didn't.

Bobby Luna: But at the house?

Roberto Luna: At the house we didn't have a phone. I think when my dad died probably a year you know he died 65'... Maybe 67', 68' is probably when they put the 2nd phone in the house.

Bobby Luna: I thought the phone was not that old. Right? Because I was born in 63'

Roberto Luna: Yes, but my brother Lito had a phone.

Bobby Luna: When I was born there wasn't any phone.

Roberto Luna: No. We didn't have a phone

Bobby Luna: Ok.

Evelyn Cantu: Did anybody in your family play an instrument or like to make songs or things like that?

Roberto Luna: The only one that played was my grandfather my mother's father. He used to play the accordion.

Mark Sifuentes: Hmm my grandfather too.

Bobby Luna: What do you call that in English?

Mark Sifuentes: Accordion.

Roberto Luna: Okay then they used to live in San Juan and my grandmother died and his vision started fading my mother brought him here she would feed him, and he'd play all day. Every birthday from each of us he knew the date and at 6 o'clock in the morning if it was your birthday he would sit down and start singing happy birthday.

Mark Sifuentes: (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: To everyone and he was good at it but he started getting blind we used to leave him a little piece of land like the yard there way over there were no trees we used to leave it for him to plant watermelons and everyday he would go out there and he'd plant some watermelon, corn, green beans, squash you know pumpkins and he'd do it all day--- He would grow all vegetables because he loved soup and mom would make him soup and then when he could barely see my mom, when he sat at the table my mom would put the plate close to him, he'd get the spoon and mix it all together because he couldn't see very well and he would never complain; his favorite was soup... Never. He'd eat everything my mom would make.

Evelyn Cantu: Those are good habits to be around and to see.

Roberto Luna: Yes, we got to see him for quite a lot of time living here.

Evelyn Cantu: You mentioned the birthdays that he would sing to you all. Would you also have birthday parties or piñatas something like that? How were they?

Roberto Luna: Yes, with us and my mom on a birthday they would always buy us a cake--- not a big one but here for us you know if it was my birthday they'd get us a cake and eat it there with hot chocolate milk.

Evelyn Cantu: Was Halloween back then? Did you go trick or treating?

Roberto Luna: *Ase como que?* ('had to have been like' in Spanish) 2,3 years back but Halloween....

Roberto Luna: Yes, they all grew up already so they're twenty-five years old already now so you tell them now they don't want to go.

Bobby Luna: Yeah that's the bad thing.

Roberto Luna: The girls you know.

Evelyn Cantu: But did you get to go trick or treating when you were younger?

Roberto Luna: Oh yes, we used to go with my mom and my brother would take us, but you know only to certain places.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: We wouldn't --- They wouldn't let us go by ourselves a lot.

Evelyn Cantu: Okay

Roberto Luna: and then you would not hear anybody that got sick or whatever that they put something no. Then they started putting something in the candies or whatever then it got bad.

Evelyn Cantu: It got complicated. Was there quinceañera like did any of your sisters get to have a quinceañera? Or sweet sixteen? What would you guys do?

Roberto Luna: Not my sisters.... I doubt it I don't remember if they had a quinceañera. Well we probably made one for them but here at the house it was just a couple of us and probably friends of hers, my sisters, little bit not a lot. Not like paying for music nothing like that.

Mark Sifuentes: Like catering.

Roberto Luna: We would make something small

Evelyn Cantu: And that's normally how they were celebrated back then too right?

Roberto Luna: Yes

Evelyn Cantu: It was more like intimate here with your family.

Roberto Luna: It was like that. We never paid a place to go out there, no. The only time that we renting something was when we got married or sister got married... We leased a place.

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember any popular bakeries or candy shops, ice cream shops or diners, restaurants? Like growing up?

Roberto Luna: Well back over there the best bread was El Fenix bakery here in Edinburg and there's in the 50's, 60's there was a place up in McAllen they used to call it Cover Wagon. Out there you go and get chicken and it's all chicken all you could eat for a dollar it's like you bring a girlfriend or whatever for a dollar (laughs). It was good chicken and everything... You could eat inside they had fountains they had tables out there. They'd give you a basket and you finish it then if you want more you go and get more. Yes, it was great it was good and there was a drive in out here where like sonic that you went to park and it was called A & E drive in and we used to go and buy cokes or root beer float and hamburgers, Fried chicken and French fries and they would bring it to your car and you eat there curbside. Also, another place that is still open in Hamburger King in Edinburg.

Mark Sifuentes: Yes

Evelyn Cantu: That's awesome that's great.

Mark Sifuentes: It's not like here.

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember like when H-E-B's and Walmart's started showing up? Or popping around here in the area?

Roberto Luna: Back over there H-E-B it's not that old but probably in the 50's probably.

Evelyn Cantu: Right?

Roberto Luna: Yes, there was one in Edinburg there was another Piggly Wiggly.

Evelyn Cantu: It was like a market?

Roberto Luna: Yes. It was like Piggly Wiggly was just like H-E-B but except only sold food they didn't sell clothes.

Evelyn Cantu: That was around Edinburg?

Evelyn Cantu: Do you think the newspaper has changed a lot over time like people don't find it as important now or what you say they still do? The newspaper.

Roberto Luna: like what?

Evelyn Cantu: The newspaper has changed a lot over time?

Mark Sifuentes: is it different from how it used to be the newspapers like what they write about? Do you think it's different now?

Roberto Luna: There's a difference today a lot different it was better way back then everything was better.

Bobby Luna: That's where you would get all your news from the newspaper.

Roberto Luna: Edinburg Daily Review they would send it in, or you buy it.

Bobby Luna: Not too many stories.

Roberto Luna: The monitor came out they started more stories and because monitor was bigger and had more things in there the monitor has been there a long time. Daily review too but it was less [news] because Edinburg is not that big.

Evelyn Cantu: Who owned the first bicycle in your family?

Roberto Luna: I probably did like in this picture here we didn't--- it's not new I build it up, we build it up... You find the frame then somewhere you find a tire.

Evelyn Cantu: Ah okay you built it

Roberto Luna: At that time, they would not buy you a bicycle because they use the money for things that were needed.

Mark Sifuentes: For more important things.

Evelyn Cantu: who was able to get the first car here at the house?

Roberto Luna: The first car?

Evelyn Cantu: Yes.

Roberto Luna: My dad [and mom] used to have a car. We bought it in the 1950s my dad used to buy new car every 3 years it was for the family and my brother used to have a truck for work. [My brother on] Saturdays he would use it on Saturdays to take it to town now as long as they don't use it there at the house. Then on Sundays [we did not] use it because my mom would take it out to see her father and go to the church. Then the others got married then the others got a car.

Bobby Luna: Hey but your dad used to buy the good stuff Cadillac he'd buy the best (laughs)

Evelyn Cantu: Wow that's awesome it's a good car.

Roberto Luna: We bought a lot of Impalas and Crown Victoria's.

Evelyn Cantu: How was the dating handled in your family for the males and the females.

Roberto Luna: Well, actually the males because the females were a lot younger so all of us were older, but we didn't have any problem because the older brother married, then the girls were a lot later. You know actually all the boys were married by the time one of the girls got married and they're all okay... Their husbands and everything it came out alright.

Evelyn Cantu: That's good they had permission (laughs)

Roberto Luna: (Phone rings) Excuse me.

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember any crime stories that the town never forgot?

Roberto Luna: Yes, there was one the only one was with Irene Garza. The one that a priest killed over in McAllen. That was the only one.

Evelyn Cantu: Irene Garza what happened to her?

Roberto Luna: Irene yes. Back in like the 60's a priest well he's in jail right now. They caught him and well he's old now.

Bobby Luna: They didn't solve that one it took a lot of years by the time they caught up to him.

Evelyn Cantu: Were there any places that were believed to be haunted and that they thought to be true or the stories behind them?

Roberto Luna: I'm going to tell you a story in that garage there we used to have a worker there and he liked to drink a lot.

Mark Sifuentes: Oh, rubbing alcohol?

Roberto Luna: Yes, okay he would drink it because the other would not help him. So later he started getting sicker every time he threw up pieces of his liver and he stayed there, and he lasted about a week then he passed away and we took everything that was in the room then burned it. Then when you passed by at night when it was dark, we would walk once and you hit that door you could feel your hairs stand up. When it's raining, I would get off my truck once I got there, I ran but you could tell you [could] feel the hairs standing up and once you passed the other door you wouldn't feel anything. I used to have guys there, workers that used to live in that trailer and I told him today you're not going to do anything clean the garage and he was working there, then he looked that way he saw somebody walking.... He saw him walking out there and then he said what's that guy doing in there? He went out there and started looking at those three rooms there was nothing and then he told me "I saw that guy there" I told him that a man died there and then he said okay. So when he went to Rio Bravo, he used to live there and came back he bought a whole bunch of bottles of holy water, and him and his wife went out there at night kneeled down and said a whole lot of prayers and threw holy water and [now] you can walk through there and you don't feel anything anymore.

Mark Sifuentes: It's like someone was breathing down your neck?

Roberto Luna: Yes, you can feel the hairs on your arms different once you go over there. We knew that man died there and once he did that, he was gone he went out and threw holy water and said prayers that they knew how to say, my mom used to know how to do prayer it didn't happen when she was here. That was about it--- Oh wait there's another one

Evelyn Cantu: Okay (laughs)

Roberto Luna: When we moved out [here] there was a pipe [where] we used to live. At night when its dark you [would] look out that way and you would see those little lights you know [like] petroleum light.

Mark Sifuentes: Lanterns?

Roberto Luna: Yes, you can see it walking like that behind the pipe then it went inside the Woods the brush you can't see it. You didn't see it all the time, but we haven't seen it We have seen this not one time but a lot of times and not just me the workers and everyone. They say let's go over there and they say there's some gold there but no you can see that light walking from here to your car. When I used to go with my brother because he lives out there and when I got out there I came in when it's almost dark and it did the same thing I had to run as fast as I could but once I got here, it's gone.

Evelyn Cantu: It's probably a strange area.

Roberto Luna: In Mexico there's a lot of little ranches out there and someone gets in a fight and someone gets killed or stabbed or whatever they said that way back over there two girls

got in a fight because they were in love with one guy there and they both killed themselves out there in the woods so at night you can hear the screams back over there.

Evelyn Cantu: These were some ranches out in Mexico?

Roberto Luna: Yes, in Mexico way back my dad and my uncle and the people that work here they used to tell us those stories.

Evelyn Cantu: That's a good story.

Roberto Luna: My dad when he was in Mexico out there they didn't have a house they made a house and put it five feet up in from the floor and when they go to bed they throw pieces of corn under the bed and leave it there and at night they can hear the snakes in the bottom. My dad made a hole outside about six feet down and at night if they catch the rattlesnakes they'll go out and throw them in the hole. There was a guy that would come once a month and buy them the guy just jumped in and grabbed them.

Roberto Luna: They still do it here the snake round up.

Roberto Luna: there's a big place that they throw the snakes in and if you go there and you say that you like that snake they'll kill it for you and peel it and if you want it cooked they'll cook it for you and that's all they eat is rattlesnakes. They give a prize for the longest and the heaviest rattlesnake.

Evelyn Cantu: Where is this?

Roberto Luna: In Freer Texas

Evelyn Cantu: What we're actually talking about animals and stuff like that what were some of the animals that you guys hunted?

Roberto Luna: Well we still hunt. Saturday deer season is going to start this Saturday. There's in the 50's and 60's we only killed deer and javelina at that time. Now at this time we are infested with pigs why pigs? The king ranch bought some females pigs that were pregnant and he threw them out there and that's how they started because the pigs [give birth] maybe 2-3 times a year sometimes they have 6-8 liters of pigs so now its infested in everywhere and those pigs are doing a lot of damage for the farmers.

Evelyn Cantu: The crops and they like to eat the corn, right?

Roberto Luna: They like to eat everything. The King Ranch owners sometimes [would go] out and they would drop [corn] on the black top. The pigs [being] with how strong they are they would pick up the black top [to eat it].

Mark Sifuentes: Yea they're strong

Evelyn Cantu: Growing up you would shoot some quail? Rabbits?

Roberto Luna: Oh yes, and rabbits but we ate them. At first, we used to. When we were small we used to milk two cows every morning and feed the pigs and chickens and run and get ready for the bus to go to school and then in the afternoon when you were coming back my dad would be out there in front and he would say get ready and put the old clothes we're going out in the field. We would go until it was almost dark every day. I remember when we would go back to school the first day the teacher would tell you let's talk about where you

guys went on vacations. I didn't like that because when they would come to me, I tell them I picked cotton all summer picked tomatoes.

Evelyn Cantu: And was it mostly like that for the other classmates actually went---

Roberto Luna: No, not all of them. My other brothers had the better part. The school and everything and the thing is I always got together with my oldest brother. The one that died. He goes out there and I [would] go with him and the other ones [would] go to town and out there they [would] take the car or whatever. They helped everybody. Don't get me wrong we were young. Today you did this and tomorrow you do that.

Bobby Luna: Who was the one that rode with Pancho Villa?

Roberto Luna: My grandfather, Inocente

Bobby Luna: Your grandfather he rode with him

Evelyn Cantu: He rode with him?

Roberto Luna: Yea my grandfather. My mother's father he rode with Pancho Villa.

Evelyn Cantu: This was during?

Roberto Luna: The revolution out there, way over there in the 1890 or something in there with Pancho Villa and all of that but not for too long because the first chance he had he took off. I think that's when he came out this way anyway, they wouldn't miss him because....

Evelyn Cantu: It was a lot of people.

Roberto Luna: Yes.

Evelyn Cantu: Is this your grandfather that was your mom's dad?

Roberto Luna: My mom's dad.

Evelyn Cantu: Your mom's dad.

Roberto Luna: Yes

Evelyn Cantu: Okay that's really awesome. Back then did your grandfather talk to you about the revolution?

Roberto Luna: Did they have like um--- well here in this area it was mostly Hispanic at that time--- well we think it was mostly Hispanic at the time here but was there other.

Roberto Luna: No, well there were all alike Pancho Villa and soldiers... The only thing you knew was because the other ones had suits you know soldiers.

Bobby Luna: That's how you could tell them apart.

Roberto Luna: and Pancho Villa was just like us here with old clothes or whatever and the others had suits military suits a jacket or pants.

Evelyn Cantu: Is there any pictures by any chance of your grandpa?

Roberto Luna: You know the only thing that I showed you there is the kind of pants they used to wear.



Innocente Garza – Maria G. Luna's Father

Bobby Luna: In the big picture?

Roberto Luna: Yes. It's the little one and the big one you can tell the pants just how everyone used to wear them.

Evelyn Cantu: Okay

Roberto Luna: You can tell by the pants.

Bobby Luna: Striped

Bobby Luna: 1911-1965

Roberto Luna: Oh yeah.

Bobby Luna: Nobody back then would smile in the pictures

Roberto Luna: This was where we would put your picture...(Laughs)

Evelyn Cantu: That's a great picture.

Roberto Luna: At that time my dad didn't like people to take pictures of him, the only time was because my sister would get him, and he wouldn't even know (Laughs). The picture we have there he was sitting in the sofa and nobody knew, he didn't even know they had taken a picture.

Bobby Luna: (Laughs)

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember like around the 1930's how the great depression affected your family or community.

Roberto Luna: No... that was around 1930's and they had a hard time because at that time they didn't give anything you know they didn't get any help. Like right now you go out there and they give you food stamps and they give you this it's a lot different. In Beulah 1967 they didn't helped us we had to clean the roads we had to clean, nobody paid us you had to do your own.

Bobby Luna: There wasn't FEMA or stuff like that Salvation Army none of that.

Roberto Luna: If something was broken you had to fix it yourself

Evelyn Cantu: During the 1940's like world war II was there anybody in your family and friends that served or World War I too?

Roberto Luna: The only one was my brother Ralph he was over there.

Mark Sifuentes: The Korean War, right?

Roberto Luna: Yes, he was over there

Evelyn Cantu: In the 50's and 60's did you all see a lot of segregation? Or racism? I know that's more difficult because here it was mainly all Hispanics at the time but was there any sort of segregation or racism or even just language like speaking Spanish in schools...

Roberto Luna: Only like us we went to school we didn't know any English we had to take a long time--- we used to go to catholic school my dad put us there from first grade to fifth grade and then to fifth grade we passed to junior high and you were out there finished catholic school and they put you back like if you're in 5th grade and you pass to 6th grade they will not put you they will keep you in 5th grade. They'll drop a year back and at that time if you were let's say it always used to start in September 5th 6th or whatever if you were 6 years old before September the 6th they will take you but if you were going to be 7 on September the 8th you had to wait till next year. They will not take only one you had to be 6 years old and there was no childcare where they take the child and take care of them like a lot of women that work none of that.

Evelyn Cantu: How were the bus routes? Especially without the infrastructure like the roads-

Roberto Luna: Oh no the buses were great

Evelyn Cantu: The buses were great?

Roberto Luna: For us, the bus would come out. We leave at 6 o'clock or 6:30 or 7:00 everyday it came, picked you up, I remember, but the only thing is, they would not wait for you. If the bus would be there, you better be there. If you're not there he takes off, not unless you say, "he's coming" he's right there and he sees you coming.

Evelyn Cantu: Yeah

Roberto Luna: A lot of times we were milking the cows and other chores there and by the time we went inside to kitchen, the bus would take off.

Evelyn Cantu: Mmm

Roberto Luna: *Hijole*. (Spanish expression as if to say holy moly) And if you stay home, you're not gonna watch t.v you're not gonna- No

Roberto Luna: Put your clothes your gonna go work with the workers, all day, and the next day you hurry up you get earlier. And do your work sooner, sometimes when the bus came out and left me, I would get my books and started running.

Evelyn Cantu: (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: All the way to school, running-

Mark Sifuentes: How far was it?

Roberto Luna: It's 4 miles.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok (laughs)

Roberto Luna: 4 miles

Mark Sifuentes: That's why they wanted you in track (low)

Roberto Luna: Huh?

Mark Sifuentes: That's why they wanted you in track

Roberto Luna: Yeah, they had to 4 miles, running all the way. And sometimes the bus would go this way and go... 2 miles that way and then, goes back another ½ a mile and then come back, pick them up, by the time he went back over there, and headed to school you know the school was there at the... I be turning coming into school and the bus would be coming right there.

Mark Sifuentes: (laughs)

(Roberto and Evelyn talk at same time)

Evelyn Cantu: Hey!

Roberto Luna: and the guys everybody start yelling, "Hey! We beat you we beat you!"

Evelyn and Mark: (laughs)

Evelyn Cantu: Awe, that's great

Roberto Luna: Yeah, ah. Yeah

Evelyn Cantu: On track, I did want to ask you on that too now that we're-

(Roberto and Evelyn talk at same time)

Roberto Luna: Yeah, well.

Evelyn Cantu: Talking about it, was it in high school?

Roberto Luna: My dad, the coaches at school wanted me to go to Laredo I think it was, for Saturday and Sunday. There was gonna be out there. I used to stay [at school] a little [longer] and start running with friends I have there because they were in track, and I was running with them. Then one time the [coach] told me. You don't have to be, you don't have to be running with them like that, do what you are doing. So I started doing that and I went out there by the time, sometimes I couldn't even see them coming in the back, they were

way back over there and then they put me to the 280 they call it you go around the field one time and then two times you go around the field

Mark Sifuentes: Mhmm

Roberto Luna: and they put me with the guy there, that was supposed to be the best and I, beat both of them lets go and I started running with him. And he said, *Nombre!* <n'hombre> ["no hombre"] ('Nah' in Spanish) Hey if you wanna go, go don't bother me" alright. Went up and started running and I passed him, and I went out there and he was way over there, then when I got there pretty close from here to the trailer they had another guy there, and they threw him in front of me and to catch him. That was the second time and, I started going and I started going and by the time we did the second time I he was in front of me from here to that thing

Mark Sifuentes: Mhmm

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: And they said no, they're on and then I would- I said I gotta go. And I would keep running kept running home

Mark Sifuentes: (laughs)

Roberto Luna: My dad; I didn't want my dad to know. He would spank you or put you to work more like if it were Saturday or Sunday [I told the coach] and I told the coach straight to him you wanna go? And I said No –Yeah Coach, I wanna go le dije ('I told him' in Spanish) but you all have to go ask my dad. So, we were working there cleaning some cotton, and I saw them, and I told my dad that the coach was coming they wanted to talk to him so there was Coach Esparza, Coach Guerrero and Coach Waft there were three. And they said, we will tell him to let you go, ok. Well, they went out there and they were there. I was out there cleaning the cotton and as they [were taking off] I [asked what did] my dad tell you? That I was good for track for racing and my dad said that "OH no, see I don't want him for racing I want to get him to work, I want to show him how to work. Cause I don't want him to go out there and get sick.

Bobby Luna: I thought it was like, if someone would stay one of them would stay back and do your work, I could go

Roberto: then he told them-

Mike and Bobby: (Laugh)

Roberto Luna: Well, the only thing they told [Dad] was can we do, well [Dad] said, if one of, you could stay and do his work he's good to go.

Mark Sifuentes: And no one wanted to stay?

Evelyn Cantu: (Laughs)

Evelyn Cantu: This was in high school?

Roberto Luna: High school. A freshman.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok. But later you got to play softball?

Roberto Luna: We started to play softball that's when I was twenty-five years old.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: Then we went out with a friend of ours that used to make hamburgers and he was getting some baseball players to play and one time I went and got some hamburgers. "I'm getting my team together and it's gonna be sponsored by Spotburger."

Evelyn and Mark: (laughs)

Evelyn Cantu: Yeah!

Roberto Luna: And I said ok. He told me it was 25 years old and up. I said ok to me it was good.

Evelyn Cantu: Yeah, around the same age

Roberto Luna: I remember I used to play rover because there were two guys, first second and short, stop and third and on the back the rover and three on the back and those guys were twenty-five and you could tell that they, used to hit the ball out into the field and I was out there and I ran to catch the guys second base and go out there and catch the ball and "hey! They said it's not fair!"

Evelyn Cantu: laughs

Roberto Luna: I would look back every time I went out and hit they would be looking for me not to hit that way hit the other way I used to play catcher sometimes my brother Ramon was used to play pitcher and sometimes they hit it and the ball would go from here to maybe halfway and I would run from catcher and go out there and catch it.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: Yeah (laughs)

Evelyn Cantu: Yeah ok (chuckles)

Roberto Luna: Cause the ball was hit out there and I would go out there and catch it

Evelyn Cantu: Those are the tricky ones they take a while to catch

Roberto Luna: I was used to playing catcher just get the balls, I'd go catch it, they hit it and turn around and catch it sometime the empire would be in the back and knock it down and they say, "get out get out of the way" and sometimes the first base was, my brother Ramon would hit it barely hit it and it would go out there to pitcher and the first base would be way over there you know and I would take off and my brother would throw me the ball and I would make it on first base (laughs).

Evelyn Cantu: No that's awesome

Roberto Luna: Yeah at that time it used to be

Evelyn Cantu: And you all found other teams to compete with?

Roberto Luna: Yes.

Evelyn Cantu: This is how

Roberto Luna: These are them, I had about maybe 12 of those trophies.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: I gave some away, but I only have three there at the house

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: We use to go to Corpus at some point

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: I used to play out there, but my dad was not here anymore I was married already and the only thing I had to fight with was my wife.

Evelyn Cantu: (laughs) Yes

Roberto Luna: But the thing is that Bobby, "I wanna go".

Evelyn Cantu: Awe (laughs)

Roberto Luna: He would go with me

Evelyn Cantu: He would drag you (laughs)

Evelyn Cantu: Yeah

Roberto Luna: Yeah

Evelyn Cantu: Awe (chuckle)

Roberto Luna: he's the only one that has helped me [farm] since long ago, he loves farming and he's good at it if I pass away, he can do it on his own

Mark Sifuentes: He can do it himself?

Roberto Luna: Rolando and him. Both of them, Rolando is good too, and they are not afraid of work.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: Right now, the only thing that Rolando has is with the deer hunting. Hunting and fishing he likes a lot

Mark Sifuentes: He loves it

Roberto Luna: If I'm not there he's out there hunting today I think is the last day for bow and arrow

Mark Sifuentes: For bow and arrow?

Roberto Luna: Friday when we were out there, I was going out there and I saw that he was good, and I told him that's why he's over there

Evelyn Cantu: I just got (shuffles interview papers) a few more and were almost done here really on it's mostly on like the medical the healthcare systems that were going on growing up I'm thinking; Doctors would make house calls back then? There weren't hospitals?

(Sustained rooster crow)

Roberto Luna: Yes they did but actually my mother when you had the flu... with a fever they'll take you to the doctor but if it was something else like you had a stomach ache, she used to make some kind of a tea to help you out and she would know a little bit. When I was born, she didn't go to the doctor, there was a lady...

Evelyn Cantu: A midwife, right?

Roberto Luna: She would come here, all of us boys and sisters were born at home. The last two sisters were born at the clinic. At that time.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: The midwife would come to the house.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok. And normally back then do you remember, if it would cost a lot to pay her versus the hospital?

Roberto Luna: No

Evelyn Cantu: Was the hospital a lot more?

Robert Luna: It was fairly good everybody could pay for it. The only thing that right now is so expensive, and the doctor's there will, charge a lot more.

Evelyn Cantu: For the other work

Robert Luna: Yeah that's the only problem that's why my dad came from Mexico and he came over in six months or whatever he had legal papers to work here he didn't cross illegal nobody helped him. He had to be working from sunup to sundown. The thing is that right now it is hurting all those people. Bad people are coming and some good people cross. And they are doing something over here, all of them get the blame like back over there we had the cows they used to cross a lot. We were in the blinds we would see 10, 20, 30 out there some of them with little kids ladies young girls but going out that way it was different, the only thing was that when some guys, el coyote, would come out and start crossing fences, they cut the fences for everybody to cross but they don't mend it, they don't fix it. So, like that uh the farmers the ranchers would get mad because the cows got out to another pasture and it takes a lot of money and time to go pick them up cause out there they're not little pieces like five acres or 10 acres or a 1000 acres

Evelyn Cantu: To find them

Roberto Luna: If those bad people, are the ones they catch the rest of the good people get the blame too. I got a place over there and I got water, and a little shed there where we make BBQ and we hunt

(roosters crow in background)

Roberto Luna: I have a valve, to shut it down and I leave it closed; they come to get water or whatever take a bath whatever, they take off and they leave the faucet open.

Evelyn Cantu: Ahhh

(roosters/chickens continue crowing/clucking)

Roberto Luna: If you don't go in a week the cows don't have water over there and that's why you get upset

Evelyn Cantu: Small things

Roberto Luna: No, it is a big thing.

Roberto Luna: If they don't do it right. That is what they're doing taking [the valve] off and not shutting it off.

Evelyn Cantu: Back then would your family go to Mexico for medicine?

Roberto Luna: No

Evelyn Cantu: Or did you-

Roberto Luna: Yes, at that time. Well not my dad, because he had good doctors. But when I got married I did.

(Roosters/Chickens crowing/clucking gets louder in background)

Evelyn Cantu: My father would do the same.

Evelyn Cantu: Tranquilo ('calm' in Spanish)

Roberto Luna: *Nombre!* <n'ombre> ["no hombre"] ('nah' in Spanish)

Mark Sifuentes: You can't

Roberto Luna: I haven't been to Reynosa or Mexico since 1990. I haven't crossed...since 1990. I don't even go to get medicine I just go see the doctor in U.S.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok...was curanderos or curanderos ('Folk medicine men or women' in Spanish) common?

Roberto Luna: No

Evelyn Cantu: Around the area?

Roberto Luna: No not that we didn't have that we only had midwives that came out here.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: They delivered the babies. Not curanderos there was nothing like that.

Evelyn Cantu: ok

Roberto Luna: My mom and my grandfather knew of, home remedies

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember like any-

Roberto Luna: No

Evelyn Cantu: Particular that stand out to you like-

Roberto Luna: No

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: I didn't we never paid attention to that

Evelyn Cantu: Yes, yes

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah, they just do that

Roberto Luna: I wish at that time we could've known that something like this [tractors] we never even talked [on cell phones] 'cause we were probably this far out. Like me, I'm gonna be 80 and my dad passed away when he was... 54 years old and my brother was 49 years old when they passed away. I wish they were here so they would see the phone and all the new tractors.

Mark Sifuentes: Uh huh

Evelyn Cantu: Yes

Roberto Luna: My dad my older brother could see.

Evelyn Cantu: No, it is...it's the way of life

Roberto Luna: Yes

Roberto Luna: Farming is a very clean environment for kids to grow around.

Bobby Luna: Dangerous, look at his hand

Bobby Luna: It takes a toll on the whole family

Roberto Luna: I never did something like this when I was your age. You hit yourself but not like that

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: But it's not my fault because the fence was there

Roberto Luna: I was gonna hold the cows

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: Heart surgery 6 years ago, and I don't want nothing to do that's why you take care of yourself.

Evelyn Cantu: These were...the...how did this was not the-the one that fell

Roberto Luna: No, no -this one. That one was when the sheet fell. This one here was the cow, and when I had my heart surgery it was on Valentine's day

Evelyn Cantu: Oh ok

Roberto Luna: 14 of February, Valentine's day, I had a heart attack.

Bobby and Mark: (laugh)

Mark Sifuentes: Yeaah

Roberto Luna: They threw the old finger one out. This one, was on Father's Day

Mark Sifuentes: Father's Day?

Roberto Luna: and this one, it was pretty close to Halloween

Roberto and Evelyn: (laugh)

Evelyn Cantu: Ayyy on holidays!

Roberto Luna: Yes

Evelyn Cantu: So, this one was with the cows?

Roberto Luna: (Showing fingers) this one here, I had the wire and it just took it off, my hand but I didn't know my finger was gone.

Evelyn Cantu: The Cow? Did this?

Roberto Luna: And this here

Bobby Luna: He was holding on to the wire, so the wire worked like a knife and it just cut right through because he was holding on to the wire

Mark Sifuentes: And it took that one, too, right?

Bobby Luna: It worked as a knife

Roberto Luna: I had all my hand like that tie ('and with that' in Spanish) I got it really tight.

Mark Sifuentes: chuckles

Roberto Luna: (Laughs) He was still holding on, and I didn't feel it. When I went like that, I told him "hey he's going back!" When I looked- Hey where's the finger?

Mark Sifuentes: Where's the finger?

Evelyn Cantu: So, you have to pick it up and bring it down, but in the little ridges

Roberto Luna: Ahhh

Evelyn Cantu: Meti los dedos ('put in the fingers' in Spanish) and

Roberto Luna: You pinched it

Evelyn Cantu: When I was already bringing it down pos ('well' in Spanish) it starts straightening

Roberto Luna: Yeah it straightens out and it got you there

Evelyn Cantu: Oh my god, I had to just get your finger and let's go with this one by yourself cause these three. Look they're barely, this is the end the nails already grew out, but they were gonna practically fall off too the nails...it was horrible

Roberto Luna: My brother

Evelyn Cantu: Imagine, you're gonna be like this from 20 some, let's go your whole life

Roberto Luna: My brother went on the tractor he came out and he put the tractor in the garage and there was a lot of wind and he opened the door, and then when he got out, this hand when he turned around the wind hit the window.

Mark Sifuentes: Slammed it

Roberto Luna: and smashed it, I think it was this one or whatever and it just blew the win-blood all over the, all over the windshield on the tractor. When I came, I saw that the door wasn't locked so I went over there and I saw blood all outside, so I went to the house, and [saw] what happened he had it all- vamonos

Evelyn Cantu: Eeee...

Roberto Luna: Took him to the doctor and the doctor said we need to stitch it and they didn't even put something so it wouldn't hurt him

Mark Sifuentes: Ooo

Bobby Luna: No anesthesia, nothing.

Mark Sifuentes: No just straight.

Roberto Luna: Yeah

Evelyn Cantu: What year was this more or less?

Roberto Luna: What year was it maybe 1975 around that time

Evelyn Cantu: Seventies

Roberto Luna: There was a doctor here

Bobby Luna: That's his stub (laughs) it looks a little freaky

Mark Sifuentes: Dang. That's smashed

Bobby Luna: This one

Bobby Luna: Now we'll be expecting one next year (laughs) it's like every year now.

Roberto Luna: I had to come all the way from McCook

Evelyn Cantu: Mhmm

Roberto Luna: 30 miles

Mark Sifuentes: Ohh to the hospital

Roberto Luna: Yes

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: and this one here I had to go 55 miles.

Evelyn Cantu: For this one

Roberto Luna: Yeah

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: and they tell me -are you ok does it hurt? No, it doesn't hurt

Mark Sifuentes: I don't feel it

Roberto Luna: It's just the finger

Evelyn Cantu: Do you remember which ones were like the first hospitals nearby, growing up?

Roberto Luna: The Edinburg Grandview Hospital

Evelyn Cantu: In Edinburg?

Roberto Luna: Edinburg here on, Freddy Gonzalez Dr.

Bobby Luna: (Shouts out from a distance) -" Me voy a ir a regar ahorita vengo patras!"
("I'm gonna go irrigate right now I'll come back" in Spanish)

Evelyn Cantu: When

Roberto Luna: Huh?

Evelyn Cantu: They weren't that big?

Roberto Luna: no that was where they had everything

Evelyn Cantu: Yeah

Roberto Luna: But not like this one's no I think the only ones that were not even McAllen because McAllen in 1965 had the old one over there at the Main St. not new ones not the ones out there when you went in they took you right away, they didn't ask questions but where you got everything done they put you in, now when you're ok they come and gave you the paperwork. Now they don't, now you go in there you sit there, fill out the paperwork and won't take you in right away.

Evelyn Cantu: You're dying (laughs)

Roberto Luna: They take you inside and then give you all the information first.

Evelyn Cantu: Yes. Do you remember if there were any first asylums of the first center asylums or any facilities that were related to that sort of medicine-?

Roberto Luna: No. nothing like that

Evelyn Cantu: What would they normally do with those kinds of people that the town knew of...

Roberto Luna: no there was nothing like that on the 40s 50s 60s 70s

Evelyn Cantu: They would just keep them at home

Mark Sifuentes: At home

Roberto Luna: They came out on the 90s the 80s there were not that much, now it's like all those people coming out this way, 14,000 or whatever...that's not people are running because they want to kill them.

Evelyn Cantu: The last two questions I have is just do you remember of the first nursing homes or the first pharmacies? And what was thought of the first nursing homes?

Roberto Luna: Well the pharmacy there was always, there was a doctor in the 40s 50s that had a pharmacy in the same building right there and at the time, the doctor would give you everything -he would do everything. Now, you need to go and get your- blood tested liver. The nurse tells her you need a shot they put the shot right there you want give, you the medicine? You just turn it right there and they got the medicine. All kinds of medicine and now, (Roberto's cell phone rings) nombre <n'ombre> ["no hombre"] ('nah' in Spanish) (phone continues ringing) they had to many people too

Evelyn Cantu: Ok well, those were the last two I'll let you take-

(talks at same time)

Evelyn Cantu: Your call

Roberto Luna: But the pharmacies were like the doctors, where you see the doctor, they had a pharmacy there.

Evelyn Cantu: They had a pharmacy there.

Roberto Luna: Yes, the same doctor had connections...or it was his, cause they were the only ones, not like CVS or big companies now and that's why that's how come they charge so much now, if you don't have insurance, just like trump said that they need to put medicines don't get em so high, he's trying to make that you know lower the price on medicine because a lot of people even though they have Medicare or Medicaid they can't afford to buy they only have help you with so much, I got one that, I gotta pay 100 dollars which is not much cause I pay it every 3 months but it is just [some] they're really very expensive.

Mark Sifuentes: In the thousands.

Roberto Luna: Yes.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah.

Evelyn Cantu: You know what I'm actually remembering, you mentioned that growing up from 1st-5th grade you all went to catholic school and (Roberto's cell phone rings) oh. Oh, ok I didn't know if you needed to take it. And I saw the picture of the nuns that were on the tractor with you all, so these were nuns.

Roberto Luna: From Sacred Heart Church.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: My dad back then [when] we started picking cotton. We usually started in July the 4th or the 5th. That's when we started into it,because we, my dad liked to start early to pick as much to put the first bail in the Valley, and that gave you a special price not much but it was a special price if you were the first person with the first cotton and take pictures to put in the newspaper. To us it was a lot you know and then my dad took that and if he did sometimes, he took it sometimes he didn't I wish we had a newspaper when they got it and everything. We [would] put the bale in front of the Sacred Heart Church and on Sunday's or whenever people would go see the bale donated by Refugio Luna Sr. The other farmers started taking some too and by the time the cotton season was over, the priest would have 10-15 bales there. Then they take him out there sell em and all the money would go to the

church. He would always donate 1st bail of cotton to the church to thank God for his success. It was a tradition

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: and then sometimes, when we almost finished [picking] every piece that we [had]. My dad on a Sunday would say to the priest get all the people you want and tell them to go pick all the cotton you can pick I'll donate it to the church and church agreed. My father would go out there put the trailer, take water and everything for a bunch of them, some of them didn't even know, but they were anxious to know how to do it, some of them would not pick a lot, but a lot of people went, they could have 50 - 100 people there, families, with their kids and it was for the church, the kids would like it because there was a truck that we call –“El raspero” ('The snow cone man' in Spanish) he would be in a truck covered selling raspas,('snowcone' in Spanish) Cokes, bread, candies and the kids would go buy and it was nothing maybe just a little - a penny, two pennies for the items.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: He used to do that every year sometimes they could pick 3 bails over here and dad would donate it, take them out to the gin and take 'em all 3 bales. The following Sunday the priest would say, “look that's what we picked over there, thank you, thank you very much” God Bless You.

Evelyn Cantu: Awesome

Roberto Luna: And then a Kermes you know what a Kermes is? Church fall festival.

Mark Sifuentes: Kermes?

Roberto Luna: Yes, we would do that every year in church they have a lot of games and food.

Mark Sifuentes: Ohh yeah.

Roberto Luna: Ok and my father used to donate a cow.

Mark Sifuentes: Mmm

Roberto Luna: The highest bidder would get the cow.

Mark Sifuentes: They would win?

Roberto Luna: Yes

Mark Sifuentes: Wow.

Roberto Luna: and it would go to the church

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah that's good

Evelyn Cantu: That's really great

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: My dad and my mom would invite the priest to go and eat at our house. He always asked father Moses, he liked the cabrito ('young goat' in Spanish) and my mom used

to make it he liked it and he would come on a Saturday he said that, “when are you gonna make cabrito?”

Mark Sifuentes: Ahh

Evelyn Cantu: (laughs)

Roberto Luna: He said, that my mom would probably say next Saturday next Sunday. And next Sunday he would come over here and before he ate or whatever, the priest would tell my dad “hey let's go out there to bless your fields” and he would take him out to the fields.

Mark Sifuentes: Mhmm (clears throat).

Roberto Luna: Everybody was close. We were all Catholics my dad, my grandfather, we used to go to church every Sunday at 6 o'clock in the morning.

Evelyn Cantu: Wow okay.

Roberto Luna: When we would come out from mass my grandfather would say to stop at the bakery to get sweet bread. We would buy two bags of sweet bread for 50 cents or a dollar.

Mark Sifuentes: Hmm

Roberto Luna: When we came home, my mom would make a lot of chocolate, and iced tea.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah.

Roberto Luna: We ate sweet bread at home.

Evelyn Cantu: Awesome.

Mark Sifuentes: Cool.

Roberto Luna: It was a tradition that my grandfather had every Sunday morning.

Evelyn Cantu: The sweet bread and the hot chocolate.

Mark Sifuentes: The bread and the chocolate, that's cool

Roberto Luna: It was the greatest to me, when I'm talking here to you I get the picture that I'm telling you right now when I was picking cotton and everything, I'm looking at myself right now that I'm on the road waiting, to see the cotton to start picking.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah.

Roberto Luna: Picking tomatoes or the bus or taking care of the cows, milking the cows and feeding the pigs I still can imagine doing all that.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok

Roberto Luna: when my dad passed away and when I saw him the last time, I still see him here like it was, like it was right now. My dad passed away in 1965 May the 6th at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

Evelyn Cantu: Did he fall ill? He fell sick?

Roberto Luna: He had a heart attack

Evelyn Cantu: He had a heart attack?

Roberto Luna: He was going on McColl Road and Old Hwy 83.

Mark Sifuentes: Yes

Roberto Luna: On the track, for the train, there was a cement truck stopped on a red light.

Mark Sifuentes: Ah the tankers.

Roberto Luna: The cement truck was waiting for the light to turn green, and my dad was going South on McColl Road and he had the heart attack and the car was going fast and it was when he hit the truck in the back -but he was already dead, my father never put the brakes. He had a heart attack before he got to the light. By the time he hit the truck, they told us we could make an autopsy.

Evelyn Cantu: I'm glad it was instant.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah.

Roberto Luna: My brother Lito [who also passed away],[was at] that other garage, we were both making some barbecue he wanted, he liked BBQ a lot we had the workers over there in the '90s and he told him to go check him by the time you go and come the food would be ready. And he had his son about 4 years old my daughter was about the same age they went with him to see the workers. He came back, he was in line, I was in front, he was behind me there was another guy putting down his plate, he said, "hey hurry up, leave something for me!" Joking you know, and then when I turned around, he was on the floor, dead.

Evelyn Cantu: Instant

Roberto Luna: Took him out to my truck all the way to Edinburg General Hospital the doctor said I'm glad this happened quick like that.

Evelyn Cantu: Yes.

Roberto Luna: Doctor said if he would've been alive, he would be in a vegetable stage.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah.

Evelyn Cantu: Ok.

Roberto Luna: It was a heart attack.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah.

Evelyn Cantu: To be dragging it out.

Roberto Luna: I told my family that when it's my time hope I go fast like my brother, what happens if you're in the tractor? Well I wanna be ready so I can shut it off, because then probably, would go to the highway (Laughs with Mark)

Evelyn Cantu: Yes

Roberto Luna: A lot of people, don't know a lot of things about farming.

Roberto Luna: As long as you do nothing bad, you can't even park beside [the road].

Mark Sifuentes: They'll take you in

Roberto Luna: Pass it down from the father, like right now you cannot put any kid to work! They put you in jail!

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: When we were working you would come out so tired that my friend would, invite us "let's go out" no.

Roberto Luna: Need to lay down on the ground on the door because of your back! I didn't go anywhere.

Mark and Evelyn: (laughs)

Roberto Luna: There was no time and if you disobey your dad or mother, you better watch it because you're going to have it double.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah. That's good, awesome thank you.

Evelyn Cantu: Yes, thank you so much for your time.

Mark Sifuentes: It was really good.

Roberto Luna: I hope I helped you with something.

Evelyn Cantu: You had really great stories.

Mark Sifuentes: You answered all the questions.

Roberto Luna: You probably say he talks too much.

Mark Sifuentes: Ahh no.

Evelyn Cantu: (laughs) no, no. Great stories actually.

Roberto Luna: It's like I tell everybody that I know all like you, you all here and I always try to give good advice. I never give bad advice.

Evelyn Cantu: Yes

Roberto Luna: even if I know, I tell my grandson when you go out there with your friend, but they say he's my friend, don't trust if they tell you let's go over there.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: Because if there's 5 there's gotta be trouble 1 guy there is gonna try to make the other guys go along, and you know and that's how it starts, I know because I was there in school but I did try to stay away.

Mark Sifuentes: Yeah

Roberto Luna: I didn't really have the time; I didn't even have time to go see the football games?

Mark Sifuentes: Right cause you would be working

Roberto Luna: I would be working and by the time you get dressed and you know you gotta be here by 11:00

Mark Sifuentes: The games would end by 10:00

Roberto Luna: yes

Mark Sifuentes: (clears throat)

Roberto Luna: Now if you have a kid you and you want to put him to work, they're gonna put you in jail. It's like those guys, have you seen them? Did you see them coming [from] out there to come across here? On a truck, in a trailer, everybody inside como ('how' for Spanish) estab-they're almost falling down, here they won't even let you if you wanna ride on the back of the truck.

Mark Sifuentes: You can't they'll stop you.

Roberto Luna: You can't the cop will fine you.

Mark Sifuentes: (clears throat)

Roberto Luna: Back over there everybody used to go to town sitting on the back of the truck, that's fine if you're coming back eating something you know, everything's fine now?

Mark Sifuentes: No

Evelyn Cantu: Seatbelts...ok thank you so much I'm going to go ahead, and press pause here... and make sure. (turns off recorder, ends interview)

Appendix R

Interviewee: Ralph Luna, Janie Navarro, Eloisa Luna, and Norma Rydl

Interviewers: Stephanie Luna and Fernan Rojas

Date: October 19, 2018.

Location: Ralph Luna's home in Edinburg, Texas.

This interview consists of the interviewees discussing race relations, the Bracero program, and the experience of the Korean War.

Stephanie Luna: With which race do you identify?

Ralph Luna: Latin American. I'm considered an American, we were born here. I do know that my parents came from Mexico.

Stephanie Luna: Did you ever feel like you know like a certain way about identifying as Hispanic? Or did anybody ever tell you you're not Hispanic, you're Mexican. Or, you're not Mexican, you're American?

Ralph Luna: I never had any problems. Actually, my best friends were... Anglos. They never asked me. I did find out or I heard about racial [issues], that they wouldn't let you go into a restaurant to eat and that [they] discriminated. But I never got to that point. Not here in the Valley. We did know that the colored people were separated, there were no colored people in our class at that time. That didn't come until after the 1960s-- the first colored people started getting integrated into the school.

Stephanie Luna: And by colored people you mean black people?

Ralph Luna: No, just colored people.

Stephanie Luna: And so, you're saying some of your best friends were Anglos. Were there a lot of Anglo people back then when you were a child?

Ralph Luna: Yes, they had the Anglos in one school and the Latins [Hispanics] in another school. The school I went [to] my parents didn't talk English at all, I lost a whole year, to get going in English. Not like my children, they went automatically to first grade. They didn't have to go to that zero grade. I was 7 because I was born in September, and I had already lost a year. I call it zero because [I had] to learn English language. My mother knew little, my dad didn't know English. I remember when I was in the second, third grade, he would sit down with me and ask, "What's a cow? What's a horse?" and all that. I now wonder why [he was asking] but he would hardly speak any English but could understand and get along with

the [language], they were well off when they started in Sullivan City and Los Ebanos. They had a ranch and cattle and they farmed. And they were doing really well until they went [back] to Mexico. My dad only stayed 8 months, and he didn't like it, so he came back. Since my mother was from Hidalgo, they came to my grandparents and they stayed with them from there on, he started working. Over [in Sullivan City], they had the ranch, it was, how you call it, they worked in the ranch and it was half and half, for shares. Yeah, because if they had 50 goats and they would sell and get 25 for the owner, 25 for themselves. Got it? Shares. They did very well. At that time, when they left in 1933, they had the Model T's. Not just anyone had a Model T. My dad and my uncle were married, and they had Model T's. My grandfather Luna had a Model T. When they took off to Mexico the model T's had a crank to pull. I remember you had to watch out because it would backfire and break your arm. You had to wind it to start it.

Dad was farming here very well. He had racehorses. My grandfather took him back [to Mexico] thinking they were going be better off in Guanajuato. My dad didn't like it, staying only 8 months, he came back to the U.S. and started from scratch. He started working irrigating. We started in Hidalgo with where they bathe the cattle for ticks. In the health inspection. He would put the cows in the pen and open the gate. That's what he did for about 8 months to a year. Then he came to Edinburg. And then he started working with the farmers and he would irrigate and hoe cotton. And then I remember that he would have ten acres and the house. He would send me to scare the birds so they wouldn't eat the crop. He would plant the corn. There was a certain kind of bird, like a mockingbird. They would take the [kernels] out. I had to go up and down [the rows to scare them], off for two or three weeks until the corn would grow. At first, I thought it was fun. But then I got frustrated because I had to do it. Over and over my dad would work during the day. He had two mules and two horses. He planted with the horses. He didn't have a tractor. I remember [it was hard work]. He would work in the fields all day. He started picking fruit, then in 1942, he bought his first tractor. He started renting land; he saved money and bought 80 acres. When my sisters were born, he was doing very well.

Ralph Luna: My grandfather didn't give him a day of schooling. They put him to work when my dad was about 12, 13 years. He had five brothers and he put them to work, grubbing. They would pay him by the acre to grub the area, so they could farm. That's what my father did. My grandfather was just the supervisor. He would just contract them. He would put his sons to do all the work. My grandfather wouldn't do it.

Ralph Luna: One thing I'll never forget is that he said, I didn't have no school, but I want you to get as much [education] as you can. When I was about 12, he put me right away, not to pick cotton, but to weigh the cotton. [At night I had to] figure out how much pounds we had worked and picked during the week. By Friday, I had a lot of work because if we had 20, 30 workers, I had to do all the math. I remember I had to [figure] math as much as I

could. He depended [on me]. I had to tell him how much money to get from the bank on Saturday.

Stephanie Luna: Oh, so you kinda did the accounting for him?

Ralph Luna: I did. As soon as I was 12, I had to learn. He put me to weigh. I had to put the name and then so many pounds. At the end of the day I had to borrow, I mean, I had to add them up for each one. If there were 30 [workers]... and it was a lot of work.

Stephanie Luna: And who taught you how to do that? He taught you how to do that? Or you taught yourself?

Ralph Luna: No [my father] told me to do it. Because he knew that I could- he knew a lot. He [figured it] in his head. He knew more or less how many pounds.

Norma Rydl: He was self-educated.

Ralph Luna: His mother was a teacher [in Mexico], but his father was illiterate. [He didn't send the boys to school.] He did give the girls a chance, to attend school. They got a little schooling, the aunts. There were two. They did go to school. The boys, they all had to work. They did real well. When they went [to Mexico], they lost everything. They spent it all. They couldn't get along with the farmers because they wanted my dad to join the Ejido, which is a union.

Stephanie Luna: I'll look it up

Ralph Luna: They looked it up in the dictionary.

Stephanie Luna: It's a union in Mexico?

Ralph Luna: [The group] approached him and said, "If you don't join, we're gonna kill you." He didn't like that, so he came back [to the United States]. I was only about 2 ½ years. He came to Hidalgo and that's where he started. He bought the tractor in 1942.

Stephanie Luna: That's how it began. That's interesting. Did your father or did your grandfather ever tell you about the Texas Rangers? Any of those incidents that happened?

Ralph Luna: [I only heard] like the border patrol would come inside where they were sleeping, grab them out of their beds or take them out because they would run away.

Ralph Luna: I just heard stories [about the border patrol].

Stephanie Luna: It has changed dramatically.

Ralph Luna: My grandfather, my mother's father, Innocente, he was in Reynosa. [He] would come to work over here [in the United States]. And he would write his name every morning in a big piece of paper [a ledger]. My mother was born over there in Reynosa. Then suddenly, they said that all the people that [their names] where on the ledger, they would become citizens. My grandparents on my mother's side, she automatically became a citizen. My mother was only four months when she came over. He would come over every day to work at the water pump. He would take care of the water pump [in Hidalgo].

Stephanie Luna: Hidalgo?

Ralph Luna: Hidalgo, Texas.

Stephanie Luna: Hidalgo Water Pump. Have you been there?

Ralph Luna: They lived in a little house next to it. They had a lot of bananas. Then I remember every year my dad would drive us over [to Hidalgo]. We were here in Edinburg already. Once a year, we would go down there to visit. It would take us about 3 or 4 hours to get over there because it was dirt roads and puddles. I remember he would give us big bunches of bananas.

Stephanie Luna: Now you said you didn't remember the Texas Rangers?

Ralph Luna: No, I just heard stories. It was later on, the only thing I heard about the border patrol would come [and check on the workers]. They wouldn't hurt them or anything. They would just come and pick them out and take them.

Stephanie Luna: Now you said that a lot of your friends, that there was a lot more Anglos in the area when you were a child right?

Ralph Luna: Oh yes.

Stephanie Luna: A lot more than there are now?

Ralph Luna: Oh yes.

Stephanie Luna: Right. Do you ever..... and you said a lot of Anglos were your friends?

Ralph Luna: The Anglos, they had their separate school when I was going to school. We didn't get together until we were in the fourth grade.

Stephanie Luna: Did that ever make you-? You knew that they were segregated?

Ralph Luna: Yes, because you know why? They had all the luxuries. They had swings where they could play. Our playground was all rocks and stickers.

Stephanie Luna: Do you remember where the white schools were at?

Ralph Luna: Here, next to Pan American, on the east side, next to the fire department. Right in the middle.

Norma Rydl: It was Sam Houston.

Ralph Luna: The Latin [Hispanic] school was Lincoln.

Stephanie Luna: “Lincoln? And where was that at?”

Ralph Luna: That was on the east side.

Fernan Rojar: That's where you were?”

Ralph Luna: Right there on the east side. You know where 21st Street, west of the expressway.

Stephanie Luna: It was an elementary right?

Ralph Luna: Elementary. Up to the third grade.

Stephanie Luna: And so, growing up did you ever feel bad or upset that they had better things than you did”?

Ralph Luna: No, it is just [hard when you were little. My toys were handmade]. The horses, I would get a long branch. I would peel off the bark and we would [make] the head and the tail, and get on top of it, we would [ride] it like a horse. An old tire we would roll it, who would run faster with his own tire.

Stephanie Luna: Right. That’s cool. Did you ever like - because you knew the schools were segregated so that was one discrimination that you went-

Ralph Luna: I did know [about the segregation] but I didn't care. The only thing... I wished I had the swings that I could swing. I would see them and it made me wish I was in that school.

Norma Rydl: And your teachers? How did they treat you?

Ralph Luna: Oh, nice. I remember they all treated me real nice. I was in a lot of programs. They had lots of programs at that time.

Stephanie Luna: “Even in the Mexican American school, did they, the teachers, or even as you were growing up, when the school were already integrated, did they ever punish you for speaking spanish?”

Ralph Luna: No, they only would tell us, speak English so we could learn. The only time you would get punished is if you would hit somebody else. If you were standing and somebody came and pushed you around, they would get the one that pushed you, take him to the office.

Norma Rydl: In the 1960s. They wanted you to speak English, you spoke English.

Ralph Luna, referring to Janie L. Navarro: You know what happened, she would pass as an Anglo? The Anglos would go with her to talk and then when they found out, [she didn’t speak English, she spoke Spanish. They were confused.”

Stephanie Luna: Then, after that would they say anything? Would they still be your friend?

Janie: I still do get mistaken for an Anglo.

Stephanie Luna: Well sometimes people have the idea that Mexicans only look one way or not any other way. We only look one way we have to be brown.

Ralph Luna: When I was in the 4th grade, we got [along] well, I remember they would mingle with us, the Anglos, and it was even better because we would talk English all the time.

Ralph Luna: We would hear about the Mexicans, Latins from up north. They wouldn’t let them go in the restaurant. I was in the Army and I always was treated [well]. Nobody ever said anything to me. I never had any problems.”

Stephanie Luna: You heard about it but it didn't really happen to you. Do either of you remember the Pharr Riots of 1971?

Ralph Luna: I heard the only time that African American people over there [up North] were getting the rights to go in the bus that couldn't go in the restaurant to eat then they had riots over there.

Stephanie Luna: What about the melon strike do you remember the melon strike?

Ralph Luna: Oh yes, I remember that the strikers were going to fields and stomping on the melons and then the owners got the strikers and they were making protest. The farmers told the people to move out and get out. They had a point but then the farmers started not planting here in the valley. I had some farmers that would plant peppers, jalapenos, watermelons and cantaloupes and they had a lot of workers. They would hire them but then they started not planting.

Stephanie Luna: Why did you think they stop doing that?

Ralph Luna: Because they didn't want to get involved with people who would go and [destroy] their fields.

Stephanie Luna: Do you remember why they were doing that, why were they protesting?"

Ralph Luna: They said they wanted more money higher wages I remember people from town would even get in the protests sometimes they were a whole bunch.

Stephanie Luna: Were you ever part of any unions or protests?

Ralph Luna: No.

Stephanie Luna: What about your father?

Ralph Luna: No. We didn't care [to get involved in protesting. My dad said if they don't wanna work. I don't want my fields to be stomped. If they're gonna ask the ones that are gonna come to work. Well i'm gonna pay you two dollars an hour. If you don't like it you can go. But not to protest.

Stephanie Luna: Now im gonna ask about hiring practices and stuff like that. Did your father or when you were farming, did you ever employ someone from the braceros program?

Ralph Luna: Oh yes, we had about 90 [Braceros]. My dad had a lot of cotton fields. I would weigh the cotton. My dad had the privilege that he would get people that he knew had worked with us before without papers, they would come work for us in the summer and pick cotton then they would go back. They stayed here for about two months. My dad would get their names and they would meet in Monterrey, I don't know how he did it, but he would get them all in. He would take about a week to get them all in.

Stephanie Luna: And where did they live?

Ralph Luna: Dad built them a house.

Stephanie Luna: Is that how it was for most of the farms here in the area?

Ralph Luna: Let me see, owners over there at La Hielera had a big house for them. They had their own kitchen. My dad would build them a kitchen. They had cots and he would supply them with that. Then after the first week they would buy themselves clothes. I know several that stayed over and married girls from here. Now their kids some are dentists some are doctors. You know they are doing real well. They bought their house and now they have real nice homes.

Stephanie Luna: Now these braceros that came over here, was there any attitudes towards them? Did anybody mistreat them? Were there any issues going on between farmer and bracero that you can remember?

Ralph Luna: No. the only thing I remember is that they took two away. Two workers. It was the last bunch. They were young boys.]. They had a record over there in Mexico. They came over where we were working.”

Stephanie Luna: The police?

Ralph Luna: Border patrol. They had their names. When they came over, they were wanted in Mexico. We don’t know why.”

Ralph Luna: We never had any incidents of being disrespected or had any fights.

Stephanie Luna: What about other farmers? Did you ever hear about other farming families mistreating workers?”

Ralph Luna: No. we got along very well. They came here to work and at the end of the day, we were tired. On Saturdays-they picked cotton up until half day and on Sundays they would be off. They would go to town. To go eat hamburgers, go to the movies. They were looking forward to that day. We had people who would come in a truck and they had sodas with ice and had sweet bread. They loved that.

Stephanie Luna: When we were in class, someone mentioned another farming family. Did you get along with other farming families in this area? Can you tell me about your relationships with other families? Or did you guys keep to yourselves?

Ralph Luna: We did talk but we stayed mostly to ourselves. My dad kept us at the house. We had plenty of work.

Stephanie Luna: But you knew who they were right?

Ralph Luna: We knew who they were.

Stephanie Luna: So, you said that schools were integrated when you were in fourth grade-?

Ralph Luna: Yes, we were integrated. When I was in the fourth grade, we were Latinos [Hispanics] and anglos. Anyway, when I was a senior in high school, I started voting for president. We had elected our valedictorian. He was valedictorian in our class. And this other teacher, had a son he wanted to be a pharmacist. They were competing for class president. He became our president and that was it.

Stephanie Luna: So, you're saying during this time, when these things would happen, the Anglos would win?

Ralph Luna: Yes, they would win. There were girls that were real pretty Latin [Hispanic] girls that could compete.

Stephanie Luna: Did you ever think that was strange? That only Anglos would win?"

Ralph Luna: No.

Stephanie Luna: Really, Irene Garza?

Ralph Luna: She went to school with me.

Stephanie Luna: "Oh really? Do you remember when all that happened?"

Ralph Luna: Yes, it was 1951. No wait let me see. It was 1950. She was the drum major for McAllen band. She came to summer school [in Edinburg] and that's where I met her. She was very pretty and very popular.

Stephanie Luna: So, what happened? Can you tell us, do you remember what happened? How she died, how she got killed?"

Ralph Luna: Yes, they thought a priest killed her. Because 3 or 4 months ago. Remember this deal, that the district attorney kinda put it off. Now the new district attorney that brought him to court won and the priest is in jail. Yes, but he left the church and he went over there and got married. Had family in Arizona.

Stephanie Luna: Do you know how much jail time they gave him?

Ralph Luna: It's going to be life, I don't know. He's about 85. Anyway, he's in jail.

Stephanie Luna: Let's see what else

Ralph Luna: She was Latin, very popular and beautiful.

Stephanie Luna: Going back to talk about school before I move on from the subject, you said that it was kinda 50/50. Then in the 60s, you saw more African Americans in the area.

Ralph Luna: Not me, but my sisters [saw more African Americans in the area].

Norma Rydl: In the 70s, we had students that were of color.

Ralph Luna: Football players

Norma Rydl: Not too many, just a few [remain in Edinburg].

Ralph Luna: They all lived east of Edinburg.

Stephanie Luna: Cause the cemetery is segregated. Hillcrest. Have you ever been there?

Ralph Luna: That's where my grandparents are buried. The majority left. They're gone. They were crowded by us. Well, Lincoln school was right there on the borderline, the colored people, right there on the border line. From then on it was colored people who lived there.

Janie L. Navarro: It was a different world back then. It's not like now. Nobody hated them or us. We just blended in and kept to ourselves and kept to our group.

Stephanie Luna: And you never felt like people were being treated unfairly because of the color of their skin or their status or anything?

Ralph Luna: No.

Stephanie Luna: Do you think the valley is different and why?

Ralph Luna: We treated everybody the same.

Janie L. Navarro: The culture.

Ralph Luna: They got blended with our food 'cause they loved tacos and chorizo con huevo. My friends would go to restaurant and they would order that. I would not see when I

was younger; I saw it when I was older. I had friends that were over here and always invited me to go eat with them

Stephanie Luna: Now I just have a couple more questions about the farm and then we'll move on. I think you had told me, but if we could talk about it a bit what would happen on the farm if you were hire- was it common to hire undocumented workers? Workers that were from Mexico and crossed?

Ralph Luna: We all did it. We didn't ask where they were from. They would come and ask for work.

Janie L. Navarro: She's talking about the farm.

Ralph Luna: My dad would hire them. He would not discriminate.

Stephanie Luna: Was there any consequences? Like was there any laws. Would police get upset or mad or try to arrest a farmer who hired undocumented workers? Or was it the normal thing to do?

Ralph Luna: At that time, [it was a normal thing]. The people would come to the road, and you could see them, they'd come and ask you for a taco or water and I would give it to them. Sometimes they'd ask for work, farm work, I hire them for a week and pay them and they'd keep on going. But we never had any problems.

Ralph Luna: Sometimes people would ask me, if you see somebody passing by if they wanna work let me know, so I'd tell my neighbor. I have two people that came over; do you want them? And some would stay for years working.

Stephanie Luna: The reason I'm asking is because now, see if I had a farm now, I couldn't hire undocumented workers.

Ralph Luna: Now you can't find anyone to help you. They don't wanna work. The ones that are coming over illegally. They want to go where they get 15/20 dollars an hour. They don't want the work for \$7.25.

Stephanie Luna: Right, I mean who can live off of \$7.25?

Ralph Luna: At least they'd have something to buy food. Instead of getting 50-60 dollars a day or staying home and not get a penny? Right now, they're very smart. Our government is helping a lot of them. They come illegal and they're staying here. And they'll be here for years under government assistance.

Ralph Luna, referring to Stephanie Luna: “Its like this Luna, the children, they are illegal children that are going to school, and the schools don't report them or anything. Did you know that?

Stephanie Luna: That undocumented children go to school?

Ralph Luna: Schools are full of them.

Stephanie Luna: Right.

Janie L. Navarro: No child left behind.

Ralph Luna: And their parents are illegal. We know about that. And the schools don't do anything about it. They get 50 dollars a day for each student.

Norma Rydl: Well yes. That's how our school manages, the state gives them money.

Ralph Luna: And why do you think all those people are coming from Honduras now? Because they know once they get down here, they're gonna get all the government benefits.

Stephanie Luna: How long did you say you taught for?

Norma Rydl: 37 years.

Stephanie Luna: What do you think was different?

Ralph Luna: It was different because when I went to school it was 75% English and 25% Spanish and now my great-grandchildren speak 99% English. they're all English speaking. All my little grandkids come here, and they don't talk Spanish.

Janie L. Navarro: My grandkids can understand it, but they can't speak it. and I speak to them in Spanish, but they can't communicate with me in Spanish.

Ralph Luna, referring to Stephanie Luna: What do you think? They should talk like little bit of Spanish so they could get a better job.

Stephanie Luna: Oh, like my child?

Ralph Luna: Yes.

Ralph Luna: I have a grandson, he's a doctor. When he finished school at A&M, he went to Medical in Houston for 4 years. The student's doctors would go to him because they had a lot of people from Monterrey. They had a lot of Mexican people over there in the hospital.

They needed someone to talk Spanish they would go to him, thinking that he knew he had to learn Spanish. He said he had to run to the dictionary to find out, but said he learned and now he's a doctor in Weslaco.

Ralph Luna: Now that I went to the war and I came back I feel more American than a lot of people because I did something for my country.

Fernan Rojas: Okay. All right. So, switching subjects. Ralph Luna, um do you remember how old you were when you were drafted?

Ralph Luna: Yes, I was nineteen.

Fernan Rojas: You were nineteen—okay tell me about that day when you found out—how did you find out?

Ralph Luna: I had to, go and sign my name...that I was eighteen already.

Fernan Rojas: And then—so when you were nineteen—

Ralph Luna: Then yes, at eighteen then at nineteen I got a letter saying that I had to...go to the army. And I got deferred—because I only went half a year to college.

Fernan Rojas: Okay.

Ralph Luna: And I got a letter saying that I had to report. But then my dad got me a deferment because I was the oldest to be on the farm. So I got it for six months. So I went to college and then I got the second letter that I had to renew my deferment but then I said no, it's not fair, my other brother was gonna be drafted and I would rather go and let my brother stay.

Fernan Rojas: What other brother?

Stephanie Luna: Lito—Romulo. He was only a year and a half younger than me

Fernan Rojas: Okay—but when he got that letter you said “no” so you basically took his spot—

Ralph Luna: No, I said—automatically I said no.

Fernan Rojas: Okay, because you wanted to go instead of your brother.

Ralph Luna: Right, if I hadn't been drafted again, he had to go. So, I said I wouldn't feel right for me to stay and him to go so I made that decision.

Fernan Rojas: Tell me about that day, how did you feel about it?

Ralph Luna: I felt “now I have to go” but then said I don’t want my brother to go...because I already had known that several people had gotten killed...some of my friends in Korea. Then I said, “well I have to make up my mind,” and I even canceled my wedding (chuckles).

Fernan Rojas: Oh okay, how did you—

Ralph Luna: I canceled my wedding because I was going to be drafted (chuckles) I was going to get married.

Fernan Rojas: What did your fiancée say about that?

Ralph Luna: Well she didn’t say...only if you have to go you have to go. (Laughs) We cancelled it for two years.

Fernan Rojas: Really quick (turns to Eloisa) how did you feel about him getting drafted?

Eloisa Luna: Well there is nothing you can do. I just said go and my god be with you—

Fernan Rojas: Okay, ah did you have any feelings about it? (Turning to Janie Luna Navarro)

Janie L. Navarro: Well I was only two.

Fernan Rojas: You were only two? Oh okay (laughter)

Ralph Luna: Well I had to learn because I never had been away from home. But I was going with people from the Valley, I think we were fifty or sixty that went that day. We went to San Antonio—

Fernan Rojas: Do you remember that day? Like the date?

Janie L. Navarro: Do you remember the day that you went?

Ralph Luna: Yes, I was on the bus December the fourth 1952—that’s my draft day.

Fernan Rojas: And that day you took a bus to San Antonio—

Ralph Luna: To San Antonio, I remember, we got over there and it was a different...and then I got separated from the bunch.

Fernan Rojas: From the group that you went with?

Ralph Luna: Group, yes because—the government was going to send me to a special school.

Ralph Luna: Anyway, I didn’t see (any) Anglos going through the army there.

Stephanie Luna: No?

Stephanie Luna: But when I was over there...I was the only Latin American...out of two hundred and forty.

Stephanie Luna: When you were in-?

Ralph Luna: In Kentucky

Stephanie Luna: You were the only Mexican--?

Ralph Luna: I was sent to Kentucky to artillery...it was artillery base.

Stephanie Luna: You were the only what there?

Ralph Luna: Latin, the only one.

Stephanie Luna: Wow! So, you went from here—

Ralph Luna: To San Antonio then from there I went with fifty people and then over there we stayed for a week but then from there, they got some...my friends got sent to Waco. There was another camp in Waco, and I got sent to Kentucky they sent me and two Anglos with me over there to Kentucky. But the ones over here got sent to ah...army but it was...rifle...ground...where they go with tanks you know it's the

Norma Rydle: The artillery?

Ralph Luna: No, mine was artillery. It was an army camp, for everything and they taught me fighting on the ground and all that, but when they sent me to Korea, they... I was in an artillery camp, so they thought I had artillery background, but it was just the place...75th Artillery Unit...and I got sent to Korea—no I got sent to Japan and from Japan they sent me to Korea. It took me seventeen days to get over there.

Stephanie Luna: Seventeen days?

Ralph Luna: By boat, day and night.

Stephanie Luna: Oh, my goodness.

Ralph Luna: If you go in the middle, the days, two days in one and two nights.

Stephanie Luna: Oh, my goodness that's so interesting.

Fernan Rojas: Before we get to Korea, do you remember what basic, ah, training was like for you?

Ralph Luna: Well I had to learn (a lot). It was ah, it was rough. It was rough because, I remember my ankles got swollen because we ran...walked a lot—

Fernan Rojas: Marched a lot—

Ralph Luna: Marched a lot and do their routine. Then we would go to firing school firing practice.

Fernan Rojas: Just ah, a little, a little fun fact question, what was the food like for you, once you got to the army in basic training?

Ralph Luna: It was good.

Fernan Rojas: It was good?

Ralph Luna: It was good. I enjoyed it. The only thing that I learned was to eat more .. Anglo...meals like, ... like cabbage (laughter), the cabbage how they call it...scout...(collectively), sauerkraut and then they, (would) give you the cabbage...boiled cabbage...

Stephanie Luna: Did you like it?

Ralph Luna: I learned to (laughter) eat it.

Stephanie Luna: I love cabbage.

Ralph Luna: The biscuits, (were something new to me), we took coals to the barracks so they would, (heat the barracks)...everything got heated during winter—I got there in winter. When I got over there, I didn't go inside with the other ones. I stayed outside playing with the snow, I never had seen snow (laughter) and then in about an hour I got frozen and I didn't know what to do, because I was touching the snow and ah enjoying the outside, —everybody was sitting down eating—eating ice-cream. They had a big gallon of ice cream they were eating (laughter) and then I, I went in and, they said there's your bed and I went and crawled in and then after that when I would see the snow I stayed away from it (laughter).

Stephanie Luna: No more.

Ralph Luna: We, we would be training and our, canteens would get frozen. No water.

Stephanie Luna: This was in Kentucky?

Ralph Luna: Kentucky, yes.

Fernan Rojas: Did you—what was your experiences like there with other—from people from around the country like, so with colored people, white people—and you said you were the only Latin American.

Ralph Luna: Right (there were no colored) people there.

Fernan Rojas: Oh, you didn't, it was just white—

Ralph Luna: No, just white...I was the only Latin American.

Fernan Rojas: Oh okay, so what was that like?

Ralph Luna: I got along with them. They had Italians ...I would try and speak with them but they...could (only) understand a few words in Spanish but ah, they looked like us, you know a little...light color. There were a lot of people from Massachusetts—a lot of soldiers (they would say), “pass-ah-tah” and I would say, “what in the world is that ‘pass ah tah,’” pass the tea (laughter) you know you had to learn (a new dialect). I learned (to guard) watching the barracks at night...they would put us to guard their camps. Once a week you’d get chosen to be guard there at night and believe me that was cold and you had to be awake and it was quite an experience.

Norma Rydl: How long did you stay in Kentucky?

Ralph Luna: Four Months.

Ralph Luna: Then I remember that when I came back—I had an experience; I never had been in an airplane and I wanted to get home so I went in an airplane. After I got finished on Kentucky, I was going to Houston and from Houston I was coming to Brownsville. That (time) when I was going to Houston we got caught in a storm, and the planes motors quit, and we went down completely like a jet and finally the pilot got a motor going. So, we went back to Dallas to stay overnight but that was the worst. The plane was going, going, going down, both motors quit. And then I remember when I was trying to get my hat—my army cap. I was looking for my cap, everybody (started) giving me money, they thought I was looking for (my) money that I lost—they were giving me dollars (laughter) and I wanted my cap because we were thrown off the seats. It was a commercial flight; it was regular people just travelers and I was the only one in the army there because I lost my cap and I’ll never forget—that. I think I ended up with a couple of dollars that weren’t mine. (laughter)

Fernan Rojas: So, after four months in Kentucky—then I guess you got a little bit of time off and you decided to come home—

Ralph Luna: I came back—we came back then flew back to San Antonio and from there I had to—come in the bus and then my dad picked me up and when my dad picked me up well...my...Spanish was kind of—

Stephanie Luna: Rusty.

Ralph Luna: Rusty. And I asked dad if he could give me (money)—I wanted to buy something, I told him to stop at the store and ah, instead of saying peceta I said, “pesh-eta” and my dad, he looked at me—(a peceta it is a...quarter) and I said, “dad, can I borrow a pesheta?” and my dad said—“what?” (Laughter) because I hadn’t talked Spanish for four months and I’ll never forget that...when I went to Korea there were no Mexicans, I was the only (one who spoke) Spanish.

Janie L. Navarro: What did you want to buy with the twenty-five cents?

Ralph Luna: I was gonna buy something...

Stephanie Luna: You don't remember what it was?

Ralph Luna: I don't remember now but because he got (emotional) I just said its okay dad, it's okay, and I took his hat away and I put it in my lap and ah, I was so happy to see him that I—that I don't remember (how to speak) my Spanish was—

Stephanie Luna: Was a little rusty—

Fernan Rojas: So, after your time off, how—okay so—Japan, first you went to japan, right, tell me about the boat ride.

Ralph Luna: Japan, from there I got to Japan in seventeen days, and we stayed there for about a week and then I got sent to Korea and that was another three—three, four days by boat to Seoul, Korea.

Ralph Luna: When I got in the boat, I threw up for half a day—a whole day I couldn't eat it was awful after about a day...two days I started, getting used to it. After you get down from the boat you start (to sway). I had some friends who were in the navy and they stayed there months and months on the boat. (Don't know how they did it). I got sent to Korea I got sent with seven—seven soldiers. Myself and—(six) were seven to replace some that were coming (back). I'm gonna tell—this is gonna be interesting; I went and...we got ah...all together they got us—in a truck and they took me to old baldy, that's a frontline, its where we were fighting. We were standing up and the commander was giving a lecture, suddenly I heard some noise and they came and grabbed my legs and knocked me down to the ground. The bombs—some bombs were going to hit the area and they knocked us down. We didn't know, we had never heard—heard that noise when the bombs are gonna fall down. That (day) we found out—every time we would hear that noise, we would run...run to the side of the hill and we had little, caves that we had built so we would run in just to protect ourselves. Then I think I was there for about two or three days, and these other seven soldiers that had been there for a year—had been fighting, they were coming home, they were celebrating. Two days later... they were very, very happy and one night they started bombarding our area. I think we got twenty-three bombs hit in our area. Twenty-three and that's the worst, that's the worst night I ever... went through—I prayed, and I think we all (prayed)...you know because we could hear the bombs in the back of us hitting. Then one of the shells...almost went into the middle of our gun (supply) where the guns...our 105's...the shell almost went through inside but it killed the guy that was controlling the 105s, the one that sits down and he controls the area because the artillery post has people—they call it O.P. up on the top...observation post and the people there, five of them, they control the guns. They told them to (turn it to) the left and so much to the right so they can hit them. The bomb hit (and) killed a boy—our soldier, all the bombs inside start, exploding... all the ones that had gone in to help the injured got killed. I think it was about twenty-five that got killed that night.

Fernan Rojas: So, you loaded the guns?

Ralph Luna: No. I was lucky because I got chosen to be a driver, and then I got chosen to be the captain's driver. I was the one who drove the leader they had us to move from that

area, because they were bombing too much, I had to tell them where to go. I had to go in the jeep, I would carry the captain, we had radios and everything in it and then we saw the trucks—big trucks that would pull the guns away to get out of there...I was a driver. I didn't get to be a gunman.

Ralph Luna: Gun controller—

Ralph Luna: My friends that started from the bottom, they became sergeants.

Fernan Rojas: Do you remember the specific name for your job that you were supposed to have? Not the driver but like the gun loaders, I don't remember what they're called. Now-a-days they are called thirteen bravos, were they called that back in the day?

Stephanie Luna: No, no, no we called just called them ah sergeant...of the comp—of the—we had five guns—there's a sergeant for gun one, gun two—and then there was the captain. They start as a PFC but then they move up because every, every couple of months they would ah...they would move them out. And I was lucky that um Eisenhower (stopped) the, you know, stopped the war...and I was there, that was a happy day.

Fernan Rojas: Was it—umm tell—well before we get to that happy day, tell me your feelings about the war.

Ralph Luna: Oh, it's still nightmares. Nightmares because I still suffer from... If I start talking too much about (it, I start dreaming of when) I had to pick the people that were dead, put them in bags. I was brave, I don't know, I wasn't scared, but I don't know why—but I wasn't scared—we put them in the bag. The only time we knew it was a colored guy was because of the color of the skin but it was all pieces. And I think that time there were...twenty-three soldiers that got killed and then we had to pick their bodies and put them in bags.

Stephanie Luna: Do you —do you...have PTSD? Where you ever diagnosed with PTSD?

Janie L. Navarro: Yes.

Stephanie Luna: PTSD—post traumatic stress disorder—

Ralph Luna: Oh, yes but they're pretty hard. I went through that school and they, started talking and the more I talked it got worse because I brought my memories. It brought my memories back and at night I couldn't sleep. Let me see, I was a driver and we had to carry the guns, see that everybody was okay by radio, and I was the one in charge so I had to tell them to move out, or that they were...going too slow, sometimes at night, if you go at night, they would send me to get some items from the headquarters, you had to drive in the mountains without light. If you put the lights, they would blow you up because the enemy was right there next to you. I went in a big truck and I was in the back and there were two, two guns—they're huge and when I was passing by, they fired and then my ear got (damaged) from on top of the pickup—truck I fell down in the...inside of the truck because the truck trembled—it's so huge, the pressure, the ground, you know, shakes. I would see (what was going on). In the afternoon, I would sit down and see our airplanes fighting

against the other ones. I would see them coming to bomb...to put bombs in our area and our airplanes would get them up on the top and we would see them fall down and ours were okay. They would not let anybody come close to us because they would come and bomb—they knew when and what area they were coming to. Our observers would call in and right away they were there —our advantage was very good with airplanes.

Fernan Rojas: So, we have talked about some of the bad of the war, did anything good come of it? Anything good, in your experiences? Did you have any good experiences like with maybe your brothers that you fought with or—anything good that came out of the war while you were over there, personally?

Ralph Luna: No. Only that saddened me because I could not see my family. I would try to picture at night how the valley—like the citrus trees, the roads, and figure out how it was. My experiences made me...tougher, it made me feel, I have a home to go to. This is what I got out of it...that...I saw the people over there, their houses being bombarded, women all with their babies in their hands, with only a bag. That's what I called really, really sad because they didn't know where they were going, they just took off and they didn't have anybody, they didn't know where they were going. Those people didn't have a home, they didn't have anything.

Stephanie Luna: Oh, you're talking about those people from Guatemala—

Ralph Luna: That is nothing compared to what the Koreans went through—the women with their babies in their hands, with nothing to eat or nothing and they didn't know where they were going. I guess they walked until somebody would help them out. But it was not only one or two—it was hundreds—women with their babies—

Stephanie Luna: And they were...they were leaving because their houses were bombed?

Ralph Luna: Bombed, yes. Because we were fighting in Old Baldy and the Koreans, they would start hitting their towns. Then they would panic, and they'd start running. That's when I saw the little babies crying and all that and the mothers with them, they didn't know where they were going. And these people from Guatemala have homes over there, they are coming for asylum but it's not the same as being bombarded—

Fernan Rojas: Tell me about that happy day—when they shut it down.

Ralph Luna: Oh, we all, we got real happy saying, “it's over, its over!” Now we can— go home.

Ralph Luna: No, no, not go home...we stayed there.

Stephanie Luna: How long, how long were you over there?

Ralph Luna: A year and a half. The experience made me appreciate—appreciate what we have. I would go again to protect my family. I would never want war to be here like I saw over there.

Fernan Rojas: Do you remember when the war was over for you, entirely? The date?

Ralph Luna: Yes, it was in July...

Stephanie Luna: July 27th?

Ralph Luna: Of that year...no! Next year.

Stephanie Luna: So '54?

Ralph Luna: '54. The war was—ended in '53.

Stephanie Luna: Oh, wow! So, you came back and got married (chuckles)

Ralph Luna: Yes. It was a year—later.

Fernan Rojas: And when did you come back? When did you finally get back to the Valley, let's say.....

Ralph Luna: It was July—I mean...October 24, 1953.

Fernan Rojas: And when you came back were you discharged, or did you choose to get out, how—how was that process?

Ralph Luna: They...they gave me two choices—they would give me money if I would stay and they would make me sergeant—to be a trainer and then I said no (chuckles) I had my girl—fiancé waiting (laughter)

Fernan Rojas: So, you chose to get out?

Ralph Luna: Yes.

Stephanie Luna: Do you still have nightmares now?

Ralph Luna: Yes—few. Not very many.

Fernan Rojas: Um, and you said you did make friends during the war, but you don't keep in contact with them anymore?

Ralph Luna: Well I had friends—I think they died.

Fernan Rojas: Oh okay. Do you remember the unit you were with when you went over? I forgot about that.

Ralph Luna: The 25th I have my dog tags.

Stephanie Luna: So, you still have your dog tags?

Ralph Luna: Yes.

Stephanie Luna: Really?

Fernan Rojas: Okay, we'll get to that later, is there a VFW that you visit? Do you go to the VFW or... ..

Ralph Luna: Yes, I am with the veteran's clinic daily.

Stephanie Luna: Do you go to the VFW, which one do you go to?

Stephanie Luna: Not to a VFW only a VA clinic.

Ralph Luna: At first when I went, there was one in charge, there was no headquarters here, no units. He didn't want to help me out. I had a hard time in the past years...in the years past I was sick with my ear because I can't go on an airplane, I cannot fly on an airplane and I cannot shoot a gun because the noise, ringing, will stay in my ears for weeks. It's awful, it's a noise like a cricket until it quits. But it can stay for weeks like that.

Stephanie Luna: It's like a beep—like a ringing?

Ralph Luna: Yes, a ringing. Sometimes when it really gets bad, I have to go...see outside doctors because at the veterans...the doctors are there until four and if you get sick after four, I go to my doctor.

Ralph Luna: I came back and I killed my first deer and it took me about three or four months...for the ringing to stop, it got worse and then I ...finally found a doctor that told me what it was—

Fernan Rojas: It's your left ear?

Ralph Luna: My left ear.

Stephanie Luna: Outside of the VA?

Ralph Luna: Yes—

Fernan Rojas: Is there anything else you want to tell us about the Korean War, or about your experience overall?

Ralph Luna: Oh yes, I have one very important thing while I was still over there...the father of one of our soldiers got killed. I had to bring him from here to Brownsville. Because I was on the 38th parallel, that's where we were. (Old Baldy, that's the name of that mountain). The captain said for me to bring him in. I'm supposed to have picked up a soldier. For me to stop at headquarters to pick up another soldier so he could go with me. When I got over there, nobody was available. So, I went myself, I had to take him to the airport. I went, and I got there in the middle of the night...I dropped him off, I started going back, and when I was going back, the Koreans post. I was coming back and (I don't know to this day), I didn't know the roads and I don't know how I got back to, dirt roads, no paved roads, and bridges. If I had known, what was going to be, (I was by myself), I would have

stayed there at the army camp, but I wanted to get back to my headquarters. So, I...started back and then the Koreans stopped me, and they looked weird. I couldn't understand a word they were saying, they told me to get down from the jeep, I pretended that I was going to get down and I just pressed the gas, all the gas, so I could take off from there. I'm still running... at night, passing the bridges, and everything, I don't know how many camps I passed and how I came back to my headquarters. I don't know how I managed to get there at night.

Stephanie Luna: Wow!

Stephanie Luna: That's incredible.

Ralph Luna: That is—it is.

Ralph Luna: I don't know how I did it, because it was dark, and I didn't know the roads, they did not have names in English—

Fernan Rojas: You had a guardian angel.

Ralph Luna: You better believe it

Fernan Rojas: Okay. Well, on behalf of Stephanie Luna and me, we'd like to thank you for inviting us over.

Stephanie Luna: Thank you so much.

Appendix S

Interviewees: Roberto Luna and Roberto Luna Jr.

Interviewers: Edward Gonzalez and Lynn Rodriguez

Date: October 25, 2018

Location: Roberto's machine shed behind his home on the corner of Schunior and Depot Streets in Edinburg, Texas

On October 25th, 2018 Roberto Luna and Roberto (Bobby) Luna Jr. met Lynn Rodriguez and Edward Gonzalez in Roberto's machine shed behind his red brick home on the northeast corner of Depot Rd. and Schunior St. in Edinburg, TX at approximately 5:00pm. Lynn and Edward interviewed Bobby and Roberto on the same day but used two different recording devices to record their interviews. The interview below is the recording of the first interview by Edward Gonzalez starting at 4:58pm. Once Edward finishes his questions, there is a brief pause as Lynn sets up her recording device. She then starts interviewing Roberto and Bobby at 5:32pm. Topics included the evolution of farming through time, the future of farming for the Luna family, new farming regulations, growing up on a farm, and pest control.

Edward Gonzalez: testing 1 2... we are here at the Luna Property... today is October 25, 2018. The time is 3.. no wait... 4:58pm and I am here with Bobby, alright Bobby first question... what does the future hold for your family in regard to farming?

Bobby Luna: What was it again? How does it involve the family?

Edward Gonzalez: Yea the question was, what does the future hold for your family in regards to farming?

Lynn Rodriguez: Do you see it like staying in the family?

Bobby Luna: Well... I'm probably going to be the last one. my son and my daughter.. they don't really like it so they're going to college and get some other jobs. This is a tough job. This is just to keep on going. It's just hard...takes a lot of money. We will probably be the last ones (laughs) for my brother and I.

Edward Gonzalez: What do you-what do you think farming plays a big role in your family.. wait no. Do you think farming plays a big role in your family's future compared to earlier years of your youth?

Roberto Luna: Yes.

Bobby Luna: It does, yes because well it's a living. You got to do something to survive.

Edward Gonzalez: You got to put food on the table!

(Roberto, Bobby and Edward laugh)

Edward Gonzalez: When did farming stop becoming the main priority for your family? What do you think this means for the future of the Lunas?

Bobby Luna: It's always been a priority. We can't stop we got to keep going, so it's always been a priority.

Edward Gonzalez: Alright, 20 years from now do you think the future of the Lunas generation will maintain the land? Or do you think it'll become another plaza or parking lot?

Bobby Luna: We're slowly getting ran out and going further out.

Edward Gonzalez: What is pushing you guys out?

Bobby Luna: All these subdivisions, houses, the town is getting bigger and bigger I mean it's growing. There is not much land around here... so the land is finishing. So, to farm we're slowly going further out.

Lynn Rodriguez: Like further north?

Bobby Luna: Yes, McCook out there where there is not that many houses... we used to farm a lot of land here in Edinburg... where Sonic was we used to farm there, around the University, El Bosque apartments.

Edward Gonzalez: I heard yall even farmed near Peter Piper there?

Bobby Luna: It's all full of commercial land.

Roberto Luna: We used to farm out there where there is parking... where El Bosque apartments are. We used to farm where Pan American started when it was just one building... we used to farm part of it.

Edward Gonzalez: So how does that make you feel? Like from there to now.

Bobby Luna: You cannot stop it. It is going to be an ongoing situation. You got to role with it. You know just... keep going and keep farming land out there. Whatever your loss is you got to make it up here.

Edward Gonzalez: How did you stay so tightly knit and unified with your family through the years? How does this help present day life and in future endeavors?

Bobby Luna: A good thing is... that my dad and I have been working side-by-side since I was 15.

Roberto Luna: He was 12 years when he started driving a tractor.

Edward Gonzalez: He was 12 years old when he started?

(Roberto, Bobby, and Edward laugh out loud)

Roberto Luna: He used to come with me when he was little. His mom would bring him to me, and I would place him to the back seat of the tractor and take him a pillow and a blanket and I'd be driving, and he'd be sleeping on the back.

Bobby Luna: I did not want to stay at the house either!

(Robert, Bobby, and Edward laugh)

Roberto Luna: At 10 a.m. o'clock she would pick him up and take him home.

Edward Gonzalez: If your family moved to the Rio Grande Valley in present time rather than decades ago do you believe the outcome would be the same? Or what would change?

Bobby Luna: Right now, we wouldn't be here. If it wasn't for my grandfather. He is the one who started it. It's got to start back then... we wouldn't be here where we are right now if it wasn't for him.

Edward Gonzalez: What do you think changed? What would be the reason behind that?

Roberto Luna: Subdivisions.

Bobby Luna: What is bad about it is the market. The market hasn't changed in years and everything else has and the prices are practically the same as it was 20 years ago.

Edward Gonzalez: So, the prices are the same?

Bobby Luna: The corn and everything else is going up! It is hard to budget, but you have to budget yourself.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, it is not worth as much?

Bobby Luna: Yes, you just got to try.

Roberto Luna: Yes, we didn't always used to have that problem... the birds eating our corn, something like that since the past 2 years they started doing that.

Edward Gonzalez: So, this is just from 3 years ago? (Pointing at crops eaten by birds) the birds are barely coming in?

Roberto Luna: They can eat a whole area of land clean. One year we had up to 200 acres of corn real pretty and we didn't have enough money to pay for the seed... 200 acres.

Edward Gonzalez: Wasted. Just because of the birds, because of hungry birds.

Roberto Luna: They ate it.

Edward Gonzalez: So, with the subdivisions, with your family going to college, and the birds it is pretty much getting really, really difficult?

Bobby Luna: Yes, it is very very hard. A lot of farmers are not making it.

Roberto Luna: Right now the farming, we're here now because we do everything! We have to pay for this, pay for that... we do all the labor also.

Edward Gonzalez: Yall are self-made.

Roberto Luna: We're doing it ourselves. They are doing it, I'm doing it and my other son Rolando.

Edward Gonzalez: Do you feel like you've surpassed other families because you guys are doing everything self-made, self-sufficient like with the family keeping it tight?

Bobby Luna: Yes, I mean you have to in order to survive in this kind of environment.

Roberto Luna: You need to LIKE what you are doing, if you don't like coming to work on the farm don't even come. You need to like it because here you don't get paid every week or monthly, you get paid every year... you get one payment. That's when we get paid.

Bobby Luna: At the end of the harvest. That's the only time (laughs) and even then, you don't see the money (laughs).

Roberto Luna: It just goes like that! Hopefully you pay what you owe and keep on going.

Edward Gonzalez: It's not a glamorous living, but it's an honest living.

Roberto Luna: It's an honest living and you can sit down and nobody tells you what to do.

Edward Gonzalez: Yeah you are the man and it's your property!

Robert Luna: Yes, you can go over there and you keep farming, but the next day you better do more because you stay behind for the day.

Bobby Luna: for sitting down that day. (everyone laughs)

Edward Gonzalez: You lose! (laughs)

Roberto Luna: Don't stay behind either, because if you stay relaxed tomorrow you need to keep doing it, then when you finish you can sit down.

Edward Gonzalez: So, in some ways it's a cut throat business, you have to be one step ahead your competitors?

Roberto Luna: If a man owns a store, he needs to open it at 6 o'clock every day, every day.

Edward Gonzalez: That's the same with farming, that's the same with agriculture.

Bobby Luna: If he opens at 9 he's going to lose clients, he's not going to get money.

Edward Gonzalez: Yea that's 2 hours of money, 2 hours of profit right there.

Roberto Luna: Exactly! Well it's a clean living, honest that's the best. Everything you see... is worth it at the end of the day.

Bobby Luna: It's better than being in the office!

Edward Gonzalez: In a cubical. (laughs)

Roberto Luna: Here you're always outside doing this, doing that. Not the same like you all sitting in the same chair every day, they pay you good, but we're always outdoors.

Edward Gonzalez: So even though the pay is great, even though you get to buy these lavish things you would still be working day in, day out because you love what you do..

Roberto Luna: Here you see a lot of things from new to old things.

Edward Gonzalez: Yea everything is so superficial now a days...

Bobby Luna: Farming is the only thing we know what to do! (everyone laughs) I mean yea it looks like we're gonna stop doing this but what else do we know what to do? You got to keep going!

Roberto Luna: Because you like it! Because you like farming and once you get used to it and you love it more... It's in my blood.

Edward Gonzalez: That's why your kids are venturing forward to college?

Bobby Luna: I want something better for my kids. They got to go after something they want.

Edward Gonzalez: So, in a sense it's bittersweet, because they are not staying here to farm, but they are venturing forward to do bigger and better things.

Bobby Luna: Exactly!

Roberto Luna: You never know they could come back; they could always come back!

Bobby Luna: My son is going into computers; these things have plenty of computers (points at high-tech tractors) he could even help in another way.

Lynn Rodriguez: Ryan is your son?

Bobby Luna: Yes

Roberto Luna: Right now, you need to go to school, at that time there is a lot of things I wish but...

Edward Gonzalez: Back then it was what you could do with your hands that was the best.

Roberto Luna: Now we would never dream there would be things like that! (points at high tech tractors) now you go out there and a sensor goes off and a bunch of lights go on!

Edward Gonzalez: So, your future generations are setting the next foundation?

Bobby Luna: You could say that yea.

Edward Gonzalez: Like how their great grandfather did it they are doing it too.

Roberto Luna: I wish my dad and my deceased brother could be here to see this. Because they never got to see it.

Edward Gonzalez: Times are changing! You could literally be face to face with someone through your phone!

Roberto Luna: They are good because like us we use it for work only! That's how we communicate.

Edward Gonzalez: People can get lost in it you know, they get lazy, things like that, but if you're using it for you know for work for the essentials... for what you need.

Roberto Luna: You save a lot of trips saved with this! (holds up cellphone) because right now if we're out in McCook to get materials we had to find someone or something we just call now. Like back in the day we would say let's go! If they didn't have it we had to go back home.

Edward Gonzalez: So back then you had to go to the spot, you couldn't just find someone on Facebook or call nor text you had to go you know... lace up your boots and if they weren't there oh well head back and find something else?

Roberto Luna: Right now, we have tractors that you can just turn around and push a button.

Edward Gonzalez: Self-driving and everything! Cruise control!

Roberto Luna: Yes, now if something comes close to the thing it goes BEEP BEEP BEEP and you wake up because you're going to turn around! It alerts you.

Bobby Luna: Yes so, you can be counting your money! (everyone laughs) more like the bills you owe! (laughing continues)

Roberto Luna: Yes, if the land is 25 feet we set it up 25 feet and you're not going to lose nothing.. its set up for you.

Lynn Rodriguez: back then when your dad was doing it he had to measure himself as he was driving?

Roberto Luna: Oh yea! We used to do it. Make the roads, do everything the planners, different planners and it's the same here. We do the same over here.

Bobby Luna: you would have a marker at the end of the tracker and be marking on the side, and when you turn around just follow that line, but you had to go straight. You had to measure the rows to be the same.

Edward Gonzalez: Now you can just leave it on cruise control put on your earphones y ya.. (laughs)

Roberto Luna: You just push the button and be on your phone.

Bobby Luna: You can be looking at the planner, in past times you couldn't look anywhere!

Edward Gonzalez: Full focus!

Robert Luna: Everything is super expensive! Like the equipment can be up to \$25,000 maybe even more.

Edward Gonzalez: I have seen documentaries about certain farmers chicken farmers and everything, they become in debt to big companies because they get loans, and they work for another person pretty much you guys you work for yourselves, you do everything yourselves, but these farmers took the easy way and in the end they pretty much it's their land but they have a boss.

(due to wind and people speaking over each other audio is unrecognizable)

Roberto Luna: Which is good it's a good living. The only thing is that the prices we cannot put the prices they put the prices on equipment, seed, and everything, but when it comes to us having to sell the grain or corn they put the prices, we don't put the prices. The farmer doesn't have a say on prices.

Edward Gonzalez: So back then you could bargain, you could be like hey I want this for this prices!

Roberto Luna: They used to come here and say hey you got some tomatoes yes how many acres? You want to sell them? How much will you give me? Then you would say give me 200-300 an acre and its yours.. and that's it! Now they don't. Nowadays you got to harvest it and take it over there and whatever the price is you're going to sell.

Lynn Rodriguez: So now it's the packaging plants setting the prices?

Roberto Luna: Right.

Edward Gonzalez: Not you guys, not the farmers not the men with boots on the ground.

Bobby Luna: They're not going to lose money because they'll take it out of your cut, and we stay with whatever we got left.

Roberto Luna: Once the crops are there, they take 15% it's theirs. Then you got to pay for packaging and everything and do you know how much we used to get paid back in the 50s 60s? A 50-pound sack of carrots you know the bags they sell in HEB how much are they? They would pay us 50 cents for the whole 50 pounds! Once they take out everything, sometimes 25 cents.

Edward Gonzalez: wow 50 pounds for 50 cents! Eeshh...

Bobby Luna: THEY make money.

Roberto Luna: yea they're the ones making all the money.. now when people go to HEB they see carrots for 79 cents, 50 cents, or a dollar and think the farmers are getting rich! Ooooooh..

Edward Gonzalez: yea that's what I thought! So when you go to a grocery store like Walmart or HEB and you see these crops being sold so expensive yet they pay you so little...

Bobby Luna: they bought it, they got it cheap right.. then they flip it.. yea.

Roberto Luna: they pay us a penny.. for a pound of tomatoes..

Edward Gonzalez: and at what year was this?

Roberto Luna: 50s, 60s...

Lynn Rodriguez: And how about now?

Roberto Luna: Right now, we don't even plant tomatoes anymore!

Bobby Luna: We got out of that because we were losing money (audio cuts) we were doing all the work and for nothing.

Roberto Luna: Right here we cannot put any pesticides because even if they smell it right away, they're going to turn around and sue you!

Edward Gonzalez: That's all it takes! On top of the crows! (laughs)

Roberto Luna: If you want to put a sign you got to go house by house and tell them hey don't eat! We used to plant sweet corn and put up a sign POISON, they'd still get corn and everything! And it said poison.

Edward Gonzalez: That doesn't stop people! (laughs) a sign poison, all caps does not stop people.

Bobby Luna: It was that good! (laughs)

(everyone laughs)

Roberto Luna: You'd think we put butter on it (laughs) farming is good business, but you got to do it on your own. If you pay for this, pay for that it's not going to last. This is what you make of it!

Edward Gonzalez: Well this concludes Edward's interview (laughs)

(Edward's recording ends)

(Lynn has just set up her recording device)

Lynn Rodriguez: Ok, uh, today is October 25th, 2018, and it is...let me see 5:32p.m. And we're at, uh, Bobby Luna's house in Edinburg, Texas. And Edward Gonzalez, Bobby Luna, and Roberto Luna are present as well as Lynn Rodriguez. Ok, so the first question, what was it like growing up on the farm?

Lynn Rodriguez: I know you mentioned going on the truck rides

Bobby Luna: Yea, as a kid? I was always getting into trouble. (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: Mhmm

Bobby Luna: But growing up, I mean it's, like you learn new things every day.

Lynn Rodriguez: Ok, so let me see what the next question is. So you're saying, growing up on the farm do you think because you grew up on a farm, that's what made you want to get into farming?

Bobby Luna: No, I liked tractors ever since I was a kid I always liked tractors, playing with them, and I slowly just got into, I liked it. You know I liked following my dad and doing what he did. So that's how I got into it, because I liked it.

Lynn Rodriguez: Yea

Bobby Luna: So, I've been in here ever since. (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: Yea well, (laughs) if you love it. Um, well the next question was did you help your dad a lot with the farm work?

Bobby Luna: Yes, I've been here, since I was a teen.

Lynn Rodriguez: Mhmm... So ever since you could, you would help him with the farm work since you were real young?

Bobby Luna: Yes.

Lynn Rodriguez: So how young were you when you first, uh, started working on the farm and what were your specific duties?

Bobby Luna: Mostly just driving the tractor, at that time. That was mostly all it was.

Roberto Luna: Irrigating and all that too.

Bobby Luna: Well, that slowly came later, but little bit of everything as I got older.

Lynn Rodriguez: Mhmm

Lynn Rodriguez: And at the time was it just, um, a family business?

Bobby Luna: It's always been a family business. Yes, it has always been a family business.

Lynn Rodriguez: I know they said earlier you all would use braceros? That they would come and help you all at the time.

Bobby Luna: That was for harvesting, for like our cotton. Well yes that's mostly what it was.

Roberto Luna: That was in the fifties and sixties.

Bobby Luna: Yea I wasn't born yet (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: So, ah ok (laughs) by the time it was your turn...

Bobby Luna: Yes, I wasn't gonna want to do that (Laughs)

(All laugh)

Bobby Luna: Yes, I was born just in time. (Laughs)

(All laugh) (Inaudible conversations)

Bobby Luna: I liked tractors (All laugh)

Roberto Luna: You know the ones my dad paid out lived out in that garage and you see about 10 – 15 braceros, illegals crossing by the door waiting to see if there's work, but my dad used to know a lot of people from Mexico. He knew them and they come out and worked for my father. He didn't have any place to put them, but they stayed out there and they put a little stove and everything. I wished we had something like this (gestures to the warehouse we were standing in) but... They just started building their own little home back over there.

Lynn Rodriguez: Mhmm

Roberto Luna: With, bob roofs and, uh, carillo with (rooster crows) then they started bringing some families over there but at that time the, border patrol left them, they let you, they let you work more because it wasn't so bad like right now. Right now, you [cannot] go inside the house, with just the screen door locked.

Bobby Luna: Yes, you didn't have to lock the houses then.

Roberto Luna: You didn't have to lock our houses or do nothing. The windows were just screen and you can just do that, and nobody robs you. Then they started coming more and more. Then you have to defend pero that's the worst, you know.

Edward Gonzalez: Southern hospitality

Roberto Luna: Before you go out be sure to lock everything up. And here we gotta lock over there and set it up, you never know

Bobby Luna: Yea people would come in here and steal.

Edward Gonzalez: So, back then you would have your workers sleep, you know, at home.

Roberto Luna: They'd help you.

Edward Gonzalez: You felt, you felt a sense of security. You felt safety and now you have to lock your doors. You have to watch who you, who you share information with. You have to...

Roberto Luna: Nothing, you can't even trust anybody.

Edward Gonzalez: You don't know their intentions

Roberto Luna: Sometimes, they come here looking for work, but they weren't talking to you and you go no, well we don't but they keep.

Edward Gonzalez: Looking around.

Roberto Luna: Looking around cause at night they probably wanna come and...

Lynn Rodriguez: And stay

Bobby Luna: Yea see something, take something that they like, that they saw.

Edward Gonzalez: Take something's that's worth money..., you know

Roberto Luna: And that's how you would go out there and irrigate at night. No problem really good

Edward Gonzalez: So, compared to now.

Roberto Luna: Now yes, you've got to be out there.

Edward Gonzalez: You have to be on your toes.

Bobby Luna: On your toes.

Roberto Luna: You gotta be with somebody else you gotta walk probably two, three hundred yards to shut off the valve at the canal, water, and, uh, at night twelve o'clock, 1 o'clock, 2 o'clock in the morning. You know, and you're always prepared.

Bobby Luna: All that good stuff (Laughs)

Edward Gonzalez: You always gotta keep the rifle (Laughs)

Bobby Luna: Your feet are always wet, you're cold

Roberto Luna: The bad thing about it is that first you would shoot 'em, now you have to let him shoot you first.

(All laugh) (Inaudible conversation)

Lynn Rodriguez: Yea those are the rules of engagement...

Roberto Luna: Yes, because you don't know what their good intentions.

Edward Gonzalez: So back then...

Bobby Luna: So, you better hope he misses (Laughs)

Edward Gonzalez: Hey they shoot you, you took your shot, aye, ok my turn. (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: Yes, that's the problem, you know right now. They get you they put you in jail. It's just like right now you got a kid, a little kid and the little kid said my dad hit me or whatever they call the police...

Edward Gonzalez: Child protective services

Roberto Luna: And back then they spanked you and...

Edward Gonzalez: ...With the belt

Roberto Luna: ...They didn't hit you on the back or whatever. They spanked you and next time there'll be more. And do this, do that and they always put you to do something, even if you're little, like, four or five years old.

Edward Gonzalez: Now they got their cellphones. They got better phones than me (Laughs)

(All laugh)

Roberto Luna: That's why the kids right now they're like that. 'Cause the father cannot put them straight.

Bobby Luna: You can't touch them. You can't spank them. It doesn't look right, now.

Roberto Luna: Of course, there's a father, that, hits them anyway and anywhere, it's wrong you know that. But, [because] of those guys, everybody gets it.

Edward Gonzalez: So, from, you can't even discipline your children you can't even protect your land like you used to. It's, uh, a lot uh, a lot uh, a lot uh, plot holes. A lot uh...

Bobby Luna: You lose a little bit of, control

Roberto Luna: If I see a guy out there stealing corn... inside...the land

Edward Gonzalez: You gotta call the cops

Roberto Luna: Call the cops you can't, you get mad. You wanna shoot. You can't. You can't do nothing like that.

Bobby Luna: We'll scare them.

Edward Gonzalez: Back then...

Roberto Luna: If you scare them, he'll (inaudible)... he's gonna call the police... and he'll, shock you, and then, we have a problem.

Edward Gonzalez: And then you're the one in handcuffs even though he was stealing from your property

Lynn Rodriguez: Mhmm

Edward Gonzalez: Yup, times are changing.

Roberto Luna: Like they say, if you kill somebody, be sure and kill them inside the house. Because you'll get inna rush. If you kill him outside, drag him inside.

Edward Gonzalez: Hijole man (Laughs)

(All laugh)

Lynn Rodriguez: Um, you talked, um, a little bit about this earlier, but how have farming regulations changed over the years and how has this effected your crops? Like pesticides, irrigation, GMO's.

Bobby Luna: Well, we've hardly ever put pesticides. I mean that was way back then, but now we hardly, put any now. It's just out there in the dry land.

Lynn Rodriguez: Oh, ok

Bobby Luna: Regulations, they're always putting more and more regulations.

Lynn Rodriguez: Are there any specific ones...that you know that have affected you personally, that really hit you hard?

Bobby Luna: Really, it's just been the spraying, that's about it, right? (Looks towards Roberto)

Roberto Luna: Yes but...

Roberto Luna: Pesticides...we're doing alright.

Bobby Luna: Yes, we got that under control.

Roberto Luna: The only thing we gotta be more careful, is where you put it. We'll only put weed eater or something that it's not going to be...

Bobby Luna: Yea something that's not too, too, strong.

Lynn Rodriguez: Mhmm... so in your time farming it's always been just that, the weed eater?

Bobby Luna: Yes...that's about it.

Roberto Luna: What distracts more around here is the traffic right now here directly on us.

Bobby Luna: Houses, subdivisions.

(Inaudible conversation)

Bobby Luna: We have a hard time going around with these things (Looks at farm equipment in warehouse) down the road (laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: I can imagine (Laughs)

(All laugh) (Inaudible conversation)

Bobby Luna: You get on the road and they don't want to get out of the way, they get mad (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: (Looking at farm equipment) I think that's, that almost looks wider than the road (Laughs) Umm, it snowed in 2004 and 2017 and did that effect your crops at all?

Bobby Luna: I think we didn't have anything planted, so it was mostly the citrus. Right? (Looks at Roberto)

Roberto Luna: No, it didn't affect anything. The snow it didn't affect nothing.

Bobby Luna: In fact, it worked even better

Edward Gonzalez: Other family's losing business ya'll taking all the...(Laughs)

Bobby Luna: Now if we would've had something planted, I mean, we didn't, we could've had a loss.

Roberto Luna: The only thing you would've hurt would be the (inaudible), something that can freeze.

Lynn Rodriguez: But y'all were planting...

Roberto Luna: The corn, it wasn't that cold.

Lynn Rodriguez: Ah, ok

Lynn Rodriguez: And it was only like, two days...

Bobby Luna: Yes, it actually works in our favor because it really, burns the weeds so it kills them, so...

Roberto Luna: The insects...it's cold, it's very cold and it helps us. Because there's, a lot of them, they would die. They're not used to that.

Edward Gonzalez: So, it's Mother Nature, being a pesticide, doing the pesticide...

(Inaudible conversation)

Bobby Luna: It kinda works in our favor.

Edward Gonzalez: Yea, yea.

Lynn Rodriguez: Oh, ok

Roberto Luna: So far, it's good, it's good. We like it.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, would you say, like um, when stuff like that happens more in the spring time that effects you all more?

Bobby Luna: Yes, in springtime, we plan around February...

Lynn Rodriguez: Mhmm

Bobby Luna: That's from February to...

Roberto Luna: March...

Bobby Luna: ...to March, yes like August, that's when you're most concerned. You got to hope that nothing bad happens. You also want it to rain.

Lynn Rodriguez: Like a good balance

Bobby Luna: Yes, you're always hoping for a good balance.

Robert Luna: The worst thing that you could get is a freeze at that time.

Bobby Luna: It'll kill 'em.

Roberto Luna: We always try to get away from that.

Lynn Rodriguez: 'Cause in February that's when it starts getting cold

Bobby Luna: We start planting at the end of February so, yes, the cold fronts aren't really as strong.

Edward Gonzalez: So, the weather's changed?

Bobby Luna: Yes, the weather's changed, and the land also the dirt's, you're want it to get a little warm. It's too cold, the seed aren't going to germinate. It's not going to come out.

Lynn Rodriguez: And I know like the climate, they've been saying it's been changing. Have ya'll noticed a difference in your crops or not really?

Bobby Luna: No, no not really. It's been the same. I mean they say it's hot, but it always gets hot in the valley.

Edward Gonzalez: It's the valley, it always gets hot weather.

Bobby Luna: The thing is you get used to the air condition and you go outside and it's hot.

(Inaudible conversation)

Robert Luna: We didn't have air condition in the house until 1960.

Edward Gonzalez: What would you all do back then would you all just splash cold water?
(Laughs) And go to work (Laughs)

(All laugh)

Lynn Rodriguez: I heard too, if you don't know it, you don't know to miss it. Like if you're not around it, you're like, eh, this is how it's supposed to be, but then you go like wait it can get colder? (Laughs)

Bobby Luna: Yes, because we were born when there was air conditioning. (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: Yea

Roberto Luna: It's like Bobby, when I was young, I picked cotton by hand, he doesn't know about that. He knows only doing it with the machine and not by hand.

Edward Gonzalez: He was with you when you were riding

Robert Luna: Yes, he got on the tractor from sunup to sundown. He was eight or nine years old.

Bobby Luna: I was born at a good time (Laughs)

(All laugh)

Lynn Rodriguez: I'm gonna include that (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: We had a whole bunch of pictures back when we started. Where we built, where my dad built that house. We were sleeping there, my dad, and my brothers in there. My mother was, uh, living over there with my other brother and my mother had two boxes, shoe boxes. With pictures, old pictures and she lost them. We don't know who took them. My mother put everything in the garage. We took whatever we needed. The house was built in 1960.

Edward Gonzalez: We see in the old house there's, uh, documents. You have the file cabinets, there's paperwork but we didn't wanna look too much into it, you know, but if, if you guys give us permission, we could get that you know. Some, some might have some great intel.

Bobby Luna: Well it's mostly, all the ones that are in there since I remember...

Edward Gonzalez: Yea the old, old

Roberto Luna: I've got some more things over there. I've got old shirts that way back in the box. Yea, old ones.

Bobby Luna: So, it's mostly old check stubs.

Roberto Luna: My dad he didn't know how to write. He didn't know how to read. He barely knew how to put some letters on a check. But my brother Lito at the time he would, he had the power of attorney to make the check and my dad would sign it.

Edward Gonzalez: He had to...write...

Bobby Luna: Put his signature on it

Roberto Luna: He had to go for the bill or wherever he had to go with him and my brother at the time, he went to school, just up to 9th grade and that was about it. Man, he was over here. He was running the whole thing here. He was writing and everything, kept notes, kept everything.

Edward Gonzalez: Just with a 6th grade education, he had to...

Roberto Luna: Ever since he was 15 years old, he was driving a truck with hauling some grain to the market.

Edward Gonzalez: And he was 15 years old

Lynn Rodriguez: So, I'm wondering who helped your dad before your brother? Like if they had to make checks or have to do, like, records, or...?

Roberto Luna: My brother, Ralph.

Lynn Rodriguez: Your brother?

Roberto Luna: Yea my dad, every day when my dad started, when he started first, he would work by himself, he went out and picked oranges and whatever, and whatever came out. So, he bought here and my other third brother came, and he would help him here. My oldest brother Ralph that was over here, he went to the Army and Lito stayed here.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, it was your brothers helping out your dad

Roberto Luna: When my dad died in 1965, Lito would come back for us and he took care of us. We were alright. My brothers, sisters and my mom.

Edward Gonzalez: He had to be the man of the house.

Roberto Luna: Yes, oh man, the, the obligations

Edward Gonzalez: Demanded the responsibility

Roberto Luna: We got together; we were together all the time. And we always work together, he never made decisions by himself. He always says, "what do you think?" What do you think? Let's go for it.

Edward Gonzalez: It was always a family...

Roberto Luna: Yes. Just us boys. In 1979 John Deere came to Edinburg, we used to go all four of us, me, Romulo, Ramon, and Rodolfo. Always when we buy something all four of us would go out there. We would go together and tell the people, the owners, I'm going instead of putting the deed to Luna, only I'm going to name you The Luna brothers. That's how we became The Luna brothers.

Edward Gonzalez: That's how you were known around the neighborhood, The Luna brothers?

Roberto Luna: The Luna brothers, yes

Edward Gonzalez: That's awesome.

Roberto Luna: We started from there

Edward Gonzalez: You're a unit, always walked as a unit. (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: We were all together. In 1982 our brother, Romulo, passed away and then there were three left of us which is Ramon, and Rodolfo, and me. In 2004 they decided to retire.

Edward Gonzalez: Took the easy way out

Roberto Luna: So, then it's just me and him (pointing to Bobby) and then Rolando came back in so we stayed with The Luna brothers. And they would say but you're not Luna brothers, I'm not going to be here all of my life and now I'm passing it over. They'll be Luna brothers 'cause they're brothers. They don't have to change papers or nothing

Edward Gonzalez: It's, uh, full circle

Roberto Luna: From there on, they're the ones that are going to be farming.

Edward Gonzalez: And then the Luna brother computer company (Laughs)

(All laugh)

Bobby Luna: Sweat the bullets (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: Like family, Bobby said, his son maybe he's going to have another job, but maybe he doesn't want the job anymore, if he retires or whatever, they can always come back as long as the company here is still operating.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, the company is for the kids and they can decide what they want to do with it

Roberto Luna: Just like Rolando. He was working over in McAllen with Animal Control and I didn't want him to come into the business. He was doing well over there and I said, "We were doing okay here." Then he retired. Now we put him back in. He's in here, working with us.

Lynn Rodriguez: Umm...well, uh, did they do, did ya'll do any hunting for entertainment or hunting for pests, um, on your farm? Like I know she was asking specifically, like, red-winged black birds. If you saw any of those?

Bobby Luna: White-wing, yes, we hunt a white-wing dove, yes

Roberto Luna: The white wing is the same kind of bird since the 50's, 60's somewhere out there? Because there used to be a lot of orchards. They used to lay their eggs inside of the orchards, bunch of 'em. A lot of black birds were here too. But when they started spraying the orchards with those chemicals, the pressure, the air...the white-wing lays in their nest is

like that (holds his hand out, open, palm facing up) you know it's not, it's not like that (holds two hands together forming a basket) like the other birds.

Edward Gonzalez: It's flat

Roberto Luna: The little ones would fall down. If it had to feed the little ones, they would fall down to the ground and that's how they started to be less and less, you know

Edward Gonzalez: They went elsewhere and, uh, the crows came and now with your corn situation

Roberto Luna: At that time you could go outside the orchards and you go out there and see the doves, white-wing with little bitty ones out there and you see them growing and in a month you see them flying... a whole bunch of 'em. You know we used to kill them, I used to kill them here. We didn't have a shotgun or nothing. We would get a wire, you know, like that (pretends to swing a wire around his head) and we see them flying because they were coming as a flock so you just go and throw it and kill one or two with a wire. And then with a....

Bobby Luna: Sling shot

Roberto Luna: Yes, a sling shot, we were good with that

(All laugh)

Bobby Luna: You had to go pick your special rocks

Roberto Luna: We used to kill the rabbits also.... With whatever, I used to bring it to my mom, and she would cook it.

Edward Gonzalez: You were doing it for fun, you know, and then ay you got a meal out of it

Roberto Luna: It was always, she would always tell us be sure and get something.

Bobby Luna: Well if you're going to kill something, I mean you're going to have to eat it. It's like deer, you're going to eat it. You're not just going to kill something and then not, why kill it?

Roberto Luna: Rabbit not jack rabbit.

Bobby Luna: Unless it's a possum (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: So, you say you had more problems with white-wing doves than with black birds?

Roberto Luna: Yes, but the white wing, they didn't do any damage, no nothing

Bobby Luna: The white-wing, the white-wing now eats a lot of sorghum. The sorghum, they eat it.

Roberto Luna: Right now, if you come out in May here, we can show you the fields where I have, where we have grain, you'll see the white-wing, on every row... they'll eat a lot of the red grain.

Bobby Luna: Where they put all that seed, we don't, I don't know (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: On people's cars (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: We lost about five acres of grain completely because of the birds. We plant more in the early fall they don't do that, just right now

Bobby Luna: Yea because there's nothing else to eat. This is the only corn around here (Laughs)

Edward Gonzalez: The same way you guys adapt, they adapt (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: They can go to HEB, they got them there (Laughs)

(All laugh) (Inaudible conversation)

Roberto Luna: Why are you always picking on me (Laughs) We love farming a lot. I don't know for how long we will be here. Me, I probably won't be here. I'm getting close to eighty years old.

Edward Gonzalez: Time always catches up, you know

Bobby Luna: You'll get there (Laughs)

(All laugh)

Lynn Rodriguez: There was a farm bill we read about recently and it includes crop insurance, so if that farm bill isn't passed would that effect you all in any way?

Roberto Luna: I don't think so. It won't affect us as much as others. Because a lot of them live out of that. Over there we didn't have nothing that...

Bobby Luna: Because we farm to make a crop. There's a lot of other farmers that plant just for the insurance and that's not the right way to go. Even though they don't really give you that much money, it's just a little...

Edward Gonzalez: So, they do it for the profit rather than doing it because they love it

Bobby Luna: Yes, but don't think it's a lot of money that they give you some, it's just a little bit. I mean if you would harvest it, you would make a lot more than that insurance money.

Edward Gonzalez: They just do it for the check.

Bobby Luna: Yes

Roberto Luna: We always make a profit.

Bobby Luna: We always meet the quota. Yes, you don't need to fall back on a crop insurance

Roberto Luna: The thing is that if you're in the programs they're going to sell you crop insurance.

Bobby Luna: You have to be certified at the agriculture office.

Lynn Rodriguez: Are you all certified?

Bobby Luna: Yes, yes.

Edward Gonzalez: Imagine, like we're not, don't record this (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: But like when ya'll were starting out, did ya'll, did they have that standard or ya'll just kind of were grandfathered in?

Bobby Luna: That came in later.

Roberto Luna: The crop insurance came out in....

Bobby Luna: The 90's...?

Roberto Luna: 2000's... 1980's somewhere more out there. It was different. It's not like right now. Right now, they got a lot of people who used to plant cotton and now plant... onions, the onions and cabbage are the ones that really get the money for the crop insurance and all that. 'Cause they pay more for it.

Bobby Luna: Yea, they have a lot, they have a lot more to lose

Roberto Luna: And grain and corn, it's not a big volume.

Edward Gonzalez: 'Cause there's so much of it.

Roberto Luna: If the price was better, we don't need that, you know we don't get away with it

Bobby Luna: We pretty much make the same pounds every year, every harvest, we're pretty set, on how much we're going to make.

Roberto Luna: If they don't come out, it doesn't affect us. The only thing is they probably, are not going to sell you the crop insurance. The crop insurance is good, it helps a little better. Because you got to have a total loss, disaster. And us, they only give you so many pounds for an acre. And let's say they give you a thousand pounds, you will make five-hundred pounds to an acre. They're only going to help you with five-hundred pounds. Insurance is going to help you with five-hundred pounds and they're only gonna pay you 60% or 65%.

Edward Gonzalez: So, yea like you said, there's really no...

Roberto Luna: That's not right

Bobby Luna: Yes, but when we pay the crop insurance, we pay them. On the way back they don't want to pay it (Laughs), gonna wanna try to find a way, we don't need to pay you (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: So many pounds you got to make, and if you make a thousand pounds, or a thousand pounds you're not covered, and you got to pay for the treatment no matter.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, have ya'll used it before or ya'll have never had to use it?

Bobby Luna: Yes, every year we use it. You have to, you have to buy it. It's a, it's a, it's a must.

Roberto Luna: You have to buy it because if you're out there with FSA programs and all that, which you are, everybody is, you bought that because you got to report what you got. Every year they call us and what'd you plant and how many acres you planted? How many pounds you planted?

Bobby Luna: They want to know everything

Roberto Luna: They need to know how many acres and all that.

Edward Gonzalez: Everything in the books now

Roberto Luna: Yes, so they have to have down how much pounds on the ballot you have.

Bobby Luna: The history, they need to have...of the land

Lynn Rodriguez: So, you're required to have it, but if this bill passes and it doesn't include it, ya'll really won't feel...

Roberto Luna: We'll keep on going

Bobby Luna: It's not we don't need it. I mean, we can do without it.

Roberto Luna: The only thing that they should get out are those programs they got with the ten-year programs.

Bobby Luna: The CRP

Roberto Luna: Yea, those they're not. People, if they have land and they can farm it or lease it, but they lease it. The government will lease it with them not to farm it for ten years. And they pay them good.

Bobby Luna: They're paying them more not to farm it, "not to farm it", that doesn't make sense. Why would the government tell them not to, and they give them good money, more money than, you know, than we could offer them. That doesn't make any sense.

Roberto Luna: We have 600 acres and about 300, we were paying almost 40 dollars an acre, equals 40,000. The government came and gave them 45,000, so they took the 45,000.

Bobby Luna: Yeah how can you match that? You're not going to pay that; you can't afford it.

Roberto Luna: If you go see it right now, it was clean, go and see it now it's brush all over. You can't farm it or you can't do nothing.

Edward Gonzalez: It's because the government presses these like Walmart's, HEB's and then that they (Walmart and HEB) press you guys, and then they and then the government comes and presses you guys...

Bobby Luna: Yeah too much regulation, too much government rules.

Roberto Luna: And the ones that put those bills are the big farmers out there they apply it so they can help themselves.

Edward Gonzalez: Mhm they make it harder for you guys to get the profit.

Roberto Luna: All the ones, you know like in McCook, there's lots of land out there. Bentsen he was the one that came up with that. He had maybe about 50 or 80 thousand acres on that 10-year program, paying 50 dollars an acre with nothing to, just leave it there.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, do you think it has to do with the market, like so there is less grain circulating?

Bobby Luna: No, they do that, I don't really know why, it's like for wildlife. I mean but, I don't know it's just some reason they do it. It doesn't make any sense. It just doesn't make sense.

Edward Gonzalez: The reason, it's, uh, you don't know, what it's really, like, we really don't know what the reason is, but at the end of the day you guys are losing money. They're gaining more money than they should, should have. You know, they're profiting off of ya'll.

Roberto Luna: Instead of farming it, get something out of that at least, they're putting into it.

Bobby Luna: They take the good land and they give you, like if you have like a thousand acres there, they're going to take the 200 acres out of that land but they take the best part of the land (Laughs) If you're going to take it, take the worst part of it, leave the good part. (Laughs) the good soil...

Edward Gonzalez: Yeah, yeah give it to you all, you know, they don't, you know, they don't get those juicy checks from that, you know, sadly that's...

Roberto Luna: And the thing is, they come for, excuse me, for 10 years, once the 10 years come up they can renew it again and it shouldn't be like that. 10 years you are up, let somebody else do it, get it.

Lynn Rodriguez: Yeah, or if they're gonna renew it at least wait 5, or so many years to renew it.

Roberto Luna: There are some farmers that have already maybe have about 30 years already.

Bobby Luna: Well on a thousand, just on a thousand acres, 50 dollars, you know, that's nothing, they're just getting nothing.

Roberto Luna: By time, it's just like if they just bought it. They pay it back for them.

Edward Gonzalez: It's, uh, it's in the sense kind of a corrupt system, you know, the working class, you know, the people that actually, you know, put in the hours don't really see much of it, you know, don't really see the fruits of their labor.

Lynn Rodriguez: And would they rather farm it or they are just, they're fine just...

Bobby Luna: Well they're the owners.

Lynn Rodriguez: They're just fine (Laughs)

Bobby Luna: Yes... We'd rather farm it... but, we're not going to, we can't match that price.

Roberto Luna: You can match the price, but everything won't go up like right now, that thing is way down and you go buy one of these (Gestures to farm equipment), and everything's high.

Bobby Luna: So, you're going to end up losing, so it's not worth it.

Roberto Luna: The minimum wage, they say they are going to pay 10 or 15 dollars an hour, yes, they're going to pay you 15 dollars but by the time they give you the 15 dollars the stores, they get it back.

Bobby Luna: So, you're back in the same place.

Roberto Luna: And we are the ones that are way out there, you got to pay for this equipment.

Edward Gonzalez: It's the people with the most money, the people with the greed, the wealth, that win in the end, and then the people that do it out of love, do it 'cause, you know, they love the craft, they love what they do, they get the short end of the stick.

Bobby Luna: You want to try to get some help, you got to pay just do it yourself.

Roberto Luna: In the restaurant it says a dollar for this and, a dollar 25 for the iced tea, a dollar 25 for the drink, and a dollar 50 for a bottle of water.

Bobby Luna: (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: How? It has, like, nothing in it (Laughs)

Edward Gonzalez: It's free, it should be free, you know it's, it's...

Roberto Luna: Yes, drink the iced tea, drink whatever, forget the water

Edward Gonzalez: Just go to the bathroom and... (Pretends to fill cup with water) (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: And that's why diabetes is going up (Laughs)

Edward Gonzalez: Profit off of that, and they profit off the suffering of the people, you know, the middle class, you know, that's the way it is.

Lynn Rodriguez: And, uh, you were mentioning farming land for other people. Do you do that regularly?

Bobby Luna: No, we, we just farm for ourselves. We've always farmed for ourselves

Roberto Luna: For ourselves, we lease land from others, but we farm them ourselves. We don't farm for nobody else or lease it.

Bobby Luna: That doesn't work, you [are] farming for somebody else,

Lynn Rodriguez: Yeah, so just, the land you farm is yours?

Bobby Luna: Yeah what we do is for us only. We don't do any custom work or anything.

Edward Gonzalez: Have there been any families that did farm for someone else and then you seen it firsthand how it backfired?

Bobby Luna: Well we kind of did, when we did, back when we planted cabbage, but it's the same thing as you farm it for yourself. I mean you just farm it for them, but we stopped doing that. We were losing money.

Edward Gonzalez: Were there any families that you guys started off with that, were like equals and then you saw them collapse, you saw them lose money to the point they had to run off and do something else?

Roberto Luna: Yes, we've seen one or two. We see them up, in town. We say hi, and...was a good farmer. But the seed cost started to increase, and he had to let it go. Because he planted a lot of vegetables and it's a gamble with vegetables.

Bobby Luna: All you need is one bad year and it'll wipe you out. There's no way to continue.

Roberto Luna: We see the big crops this year. Out in McCook and that one right there on Ware Road, they're growing... They're building a community on Ware Rd. Farmers have to grow more crops because they've gone over their budget.

Bobby Luna: They take on too much, I mean something that, that'll put them over the top and it'll be looking at... you need to budget yourself, you always need to keep a budget... Know what not to buy

Roberto Luna: There were a lot more farmers in the 50's and 60's, little farmers would farm also.

Edward Gonzalez: There was a lot of you guys, you guys were united, you guys...

Roberto Luna: Now there's farmers out there but they're big farmers. They get a whole bunch of land everything and they stay there for a couple of years or more and then they go ahead and farm.

Edward Gonzalez: So even if you keep up, you know, time, you know...time's gonna catch up to you

Roberto Luna: Here with me, I'm here because my sons are here. Beause otherwise I will be saying why bother, you have to keep everything working, everything.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, you kept it 'cause you had somebody to pass it on to?

Roberto Luna: Yes, because everything I do is for them... And my nietos, my kids and for them. One of these days they're going to maybe build a house, they have a place to build it

Edward Gonzalez: They got the land

Roberto Luna: If they stay here, of course if they're going to walk back over there. I got him here (Bobby), I got my other son here (Rolando), and I got my daughter (Sylvia) right there on the other side of Schunior on the southside.

Lynn Rodriguez: That one? (Pointing to a house across the street)

Roberto Luna: ...No, on the other side

Lynn Rodriguez: Ohhhh

Roberto Luna: That's the, house (Pointing to a house further down the road), the second one. That's my daughter there.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, um, what do you all think kind of kept you all in business over time? Would you say it was that, like smart business decisions, a little bit of luck or...?

Bobby Luna: We just keep saying next year, keep going, next year, next year. There's got to be better than this year. (Laughs)

Edward Gonzalez: Day by day (Laughs)

Bobby Luna: Just got to keep going (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: Next year, you probably say well maybe next year. You can't stop me there

Bobby Luna: You'll be in the hole, but you got to keep going.

Edward Gonzalez: You gotta have that work ethic 'cause if you don't the pressure just...it gets you (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: At this point we don't have anything else we won't, we won't do it. We rather stick it out here with what we have.

Bobby Luna: There's plenty to do here (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: And here we can go out and come back and do whatever we want

Bobby Luna: You're your own boss

Edward Gonzalez: Yea and that's good

Roberto Luna: Yes, you know if you want to do it, do it, if you don't, you don't.

Edward Gonzalez: To each man their own, right?

Roberto Luna: It's good like I said you need to love farming or whatever you're going to do with, you have to like it

Edward Gonzalez: So, the love of farming is the reason why you guys kept going

Roberto Luna: Whether it's good or bad, just like when you get married, for the best or the worst, or whatever, it's just hey, you're not going to give up.

(All laugh)

Edward Gonzalez: Every time I meet a married man and the wife goes elsewhere, he always says something like hey, psst never, never, never do it man. Never get married (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: And they do it

Bobby Luna: They do it anyways (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: They told me, and I got married, and I told him, and he got married
(All laugh)

Edward Gonzalez: It's just the rite of passage

(All laugh) (Inaudible conversation)

Lynn Rodriguez: Um, and then my last question was about the ethanol regulations. Um, has that effected you in any way?

Bobby Luna: Ethanol, no.

Roberto Luna: That's good

Bobby Luna: I mean it's even better because there's a market for the grain and the corn...

Lynn Rodriguez: And ya'll profited off of that

Bobby Luna: Yes, it's a better.

Roberto Luna: It is competition with the... gasoline

Bobby Luna: Whatever else they can make more. The better the market. It's better.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, you all do corn...

Bobby Luna: Corn and sorghum, yes, we're just sticking to that

Lynn Rodriguez: Oh, ok

Roberto Luna: Everything we can pick up with machines. No, labor, nothing like that, only with machines.

Lynn Rodriguez: So, you can keep it...

Roberto Luna: We won't find any labor

Edward Gonzalez: So back then what would you guys do like in the 60's and 50's...

Roberto Luna: We had the braceros and we had people that helped my dad and gins for the cotton. Not too many workers, maybe three or four and then us. When we came from school

we waited there at home and, get ready. Take off school clothes, shoes and put the old ones and let's go. They'd take us over to where we'd be working until dark, it's sundown. Sometimes you could be so tired, you wouldn't do your homework or whatever because there was no time. Sometimes you'd be on the bus doing whatever you could finish by the time you got over to school.

Bobby Luna: We used to hire other people to cut our grain until we started getting our own. Now we cut it ourselves.

Edward Gonzalez: So, once you cut off the middleman, right, it's, uh, it's better.

Bobby Luna: But it's also a lot more (Laughs) work, it's tough work (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: During the 40's, 50's, and 60's if you missed the bus and stayed at home. My dad would not take me to school. We had to work on the farm.

Edward Gonzalez: He'd put you to work

Roberto Luna: He would say, "Let's go to work." And next time you'd get there earlier to catch the bus.

(All laugh)

Roberto Luna: You know sometimes the bus would leave me, take off, and I didn't want to go to work. I get my book and everything and I start running.

Edward Gonzalez: To the next stop

Roberto Luna: Toward where Pan American is, back where the track is, I used to run all the way over there.

Bobby Luna: (Laughs) He really didn't want to work

Edward Gonzalez: (Laughs) You're more tired by the time you get there then...

Roberto Luna: By the time the bus was out there, picked everybody up, sometimes I'd be turning where the school was and the bus would be going by...

Lynn Rodriguez: Just in time

Edward Gonzalez: All that just to not pick the cotton

Roberto Luna: When I was dating my wife, his mother (Points to Bobby) ...her parents said, "You're going to go to the movies, yes, I want her here at 11 o'clock, right here on the stairs, the steps." We went to the movies and I'd leave her there at 11, for me it was great because I had to be here at the house at 12 o'clock.

Edward Gonzalez: So, you had just the time to...

Roberto Luna: We had to be in bed by 12 o'clock. Because my dad, wanted us ready for the next day to go to work. I would tell her goodbye and ran all the way back home because I didn't have a car nor bicycle.

Edward Gonzalez: You have the calves though (Laughs)

Roberto Luna: I sometimes saw my dad open the door and like, oh they're here already.

Lynn Rodriguez: Mhmm, making sure

Roberto Luna: Right now, you know what they do?

Edward Gonzalez: What?

Roberto Luna: You're going out, it's 10 o'clock at night, I'm getting ready to go to bed and where are you going? I'm just going out to the dance. Hey it's 10 o'clock.

(All laugh)

Edward Gonzalez: Hey, you're gonna get tired (Laughs)

Lynn Rodriguez: Who is it? Um, Aunt Janie that lives right next to Club Fuego (Laughs)

Bobby Luna: Yes

Lynn Rodriguez: I was like I'm sure she sees a lot of that (Laughs)

Bobby Luna: Well I'm sure she's bought some headphones by now

(All laugh)

Bobby Luna: So, all the music is loud.

Lynn Rodriguez: I didn't realize it was like that close, like right next door

Bobby Luna: Yes, right next door

Lynn Rodriguez: Mm ok, well that was my last question, unless you all wanted to say anything else...

Edward Gonzalez: Yea, the sun's coming down...

Appendix T

Interviewee: Rodolfo Luna, Celsa Luna & Joshua Valdez

Interviewers: Abigail Espinoza & John Gutierrez

Date: October 25, 2018

Location: Mr. Rodolfo Luna's property on Schunior Rd.

We interviewed Mr. Rodolfo Luna on his property where he was asked certain questions about the agriculture on his farm, the archaeology, if there were any points found on his property, the geology of the land, machinery used on the farm, and his past experiences with certain farming associations. He informed us of the many types of animals and creatures that are on his property and also informed us of his experience with the USDA and as a farmer in general.

John Gutierrez: Today is- what's today? Thursday? October 25th, 2018 and it is 5:18 pm. We are here today in the home of Rodolfo Luna in Edinburg, Texas. Myself, John Gutierrez, is present for the interview and Abby Espinoza, Rodolfo Luna, and-

Celsa Luna: Celsa (Rodolfo's wife)

Joshua Valadez: Joshua Valadez (Grandson)

John: Ok, well one of my first questions for you Rodolfo is have you ever found any points on your property? Any arrowheads?

Rodolfo: Yes, one.

John: Do you know where it is?

Rodolfo: No

Joshua: I have it.

John: You have it?

Joshua: Yes

John: OK.

Joshua: Do you all want to see it?

John: Sure, we will look at it.

Joshua: It's a spear point.

John: Ok. And so, while he is inside looking for the spear point, I'll go into the next question. Have you ever found evidence of wild animals that are no longer around on your property? Like horned toads or anything like that?

Rodolfo: There are a few, not many.

John: Ok.

Rodolfo: Yeah, but you don't see them very much. Mostly round the canal.

John: At the canal back here?

Rodolfo: Yes. The drain[age] ditch.

John: When was that drain[age] ditch made. Do you remember or do you know?

Rodolfo: The drain ditch, when was it made.

Rodolfo: Oh, I don't know.

John: Or has it always just been there for you that you can remember?

Rodolfo: No, NO. It's new.

John: Ok.

Rodolfo: The drain ditch, how old is it?

Joshua: It's as old as me.

Rodolfo: This one?

Joshua: Yes, because I remember-

John: And where did you all find that one?

Rodolfo: Over there, on my property, about a mile from here.

Joshua: On the corner of Hoehn and mile 17 and a half.

John: Oh ok. Well, going on with the wildlife here on your land, has the wildlife changed over time? Like do you see different birds or different animals?

Rodolfo: Well yeah, I've seen parrots.

John: Parrots here?

Rodolfo: A little different, you know, pero that's about it, parrots.

Celsa: We get different birds here.

Joshua: Yeah, we get a lot of different birds here, some ducks also come and hang out on these trees.

Rodolfo: They land on top of the roof there.

Joshua: The whistling ducks or wood ducks-

Rodolfo: Wood ducks.

Joshua: And well we get owls here all the time.

Rodolfo: Yes, but those ducks have been coming here for about 5 years. There are 2 of them that come here every year.

John: 2 Specific ones?

Rodolfo: yeah.

Joshua: We get red cardinals, hummingbirds-

Celsa: the yellow one that's always here-

Joshua: the yellow-

Rodolfo: Those are native, they are here almost all the time. There are some coming in from the North now. Different kind of birds.

Joshua: Every once in a while, he gets a King Fischer in the front yard since he's so close to the canal. Like he will stay here. You can hear it. Once in a while you will see it on that little line-

Rodolfo: Telephone-

Joshua: Telephone pole line, its right over there next to the bridge-

John: Yeah.

Joshua: it will be right there; kind of just sitting there facing the water.

John: And well, have you ever had any problems with like bees?

Rodolfo: Yeah, we had several.

Abigail: Really?

Rodolfo: Yes.

Joshua: Yes, we had Africanized bees. Well it wasn't confirmed, but they were really aggressive.

Joshua: Oh, my grandfather, they were.

Joshua: My grandfather was cutting the grass and they attacked him.

Rodolfo: Yeah, I was cutting the grass.

Joshua: I was getting home and had just got out of the truck and I went out front to see if maybe I could see where they were flying around and as soon as I turned the corner I started getting attacked.

Abby: Oh my god.

Rodolfo: Yeah, I got two, one here and one here.

John: Oh wow.

Celsa: Well, you had everything covered

Joshua: Yeah, the only thing he didn't have covered was his eyes and that's where they went.

Rodolfo: Because, I cover my head. I wore a hood and I put a mask. Only the eyes were open. But I couldn't do this (waving arms) because they were all over me.

Abby: Is there a specific season when they come? Or do they all just randomly come?

Rodolfo: No, they just come.

Joshua: Spring and summer is when they just randomly show up.

Rodolfo: They come and fly and sometimes they stop at night, rest there 1 night or 2 nights and then they just take off.

Joshua: They use to have a piece of land; they use to rent over there by the airport. And one time we were sitting on the back of the truck and there was just this cloud of bees that kind of just came in and then they just kind of started forming this, it wasn't really a nest but they all kind of formed a circle.

Rodolfo: Together.

Abby: Oh wow.

Joshua: They were staying there for the night. And they all kind of just huddled together and I guess the queen was in the middle of everything and all of them were just on top protecting her. This thing was huge, I mean bigger than that little (inaudible).

Celsa: The fire department had to come once.

John: the fire department had to come?

All: Yeah.

Joshua: Back when they use to do it, because they don't do it anymore.

Rodolfo: But they landed on that tree over there. The big tall one, back over there.

Joshua: You can still see, like if you go to the front, I'll point it out, but you could still see where the honey stain is, kind of like down the tree.

Rodolfo: They were way up there in the tree.

Joshua: They were maybe about 30 feet up in the air.

Rodolfo: It's got holes in there, that woodpeckers make-

Celsa: They also attacked the guy that came to fumigate.

Joshua: Yeah, he got attacked twice. As soon as he put up the ladder, as soon as he got up there, he got swarmed.

Abby: Oh my gosh.

Rodolfo: Yes, all over his suit.

Joshua: They were getting through his suit, through his gloves. He got stung here on his hands, it was bad.

Rodolfo: They are aggressive, once one attacked the other ones come right behind.

Abby: They follow suit (laughing).

Celsa: It's true, we stayed out here in the porch and they saw us and they came to the screen.

Joshua: They were trying to come through the screen.

John: Oh ok.

Abby: No?

Joshua: Yes, and maybe about an hour later, I kind of wanted to figure out where they were because we were trying to talk to the fire department and I stepped outside and all of a sudden they started tapping the screen and they started trying to find a way in.

Rodolfo: I start my lawnmower right there and they were all over the lawnmower. And I went inside the screen porch there and they saw me, and they would come to the screen and try to attack, you know.

Abby: And what did you say that you think they were, the African-

Joshua: Africanized because they were really aggressive. The guy who came and fumigated even said they were not normal honeybees.

Rodolfo: No, they were the African uh, African Honeybees.

John: Oh ok.

Joshua: Yeah, he said they were too aggressive, they don't swarm like that he said. Because he got attacked bad.

Rodolfo: He was wearing a white suit, all white and then he was just brown all over him.

Abby: Oh my God! (giggling)

Joshua: And I was helping him. I was holding the ladder and as soon as he got to the top, I told him it's all you, I'm leaving.

Rodolfo: And the dog, he was messing around there and they attack him and then he was rolling around.

Abby: Aww.

Rodolfo: Yeah, they attack anything that moves.

Abby: Yeah, they were probably a different species for sure.

Rodolfo: Yeah, because we used to raise (inaudible) and cantaloupes and all that and they put the boxes on the side, and we would walk along them and they wouldn't attack. The honeybees. Unless you hit the box or whatever but yeah.

Abby: But these would?

Rodolfo: Oh yeah.

Joshua: You couldn't get anywhere near the tree.

John: Nowhere near the tree?

Rodolfo: No.

Joshua: You would probably just start seeing them flying around, it was bad.

John: And do you know about this piece of land on Cecilia's property, where it looks like there use to be water?

Rodolfo: Where?

John: On Cecilia's property, there's like a, well it's called a deflation rough but it's like a, how does it look? It just looks like a huge circle on the land. And there is no grass on it. Do you know anything about that?

Rodolfo: Well the water, I guess it drowned the grass.

John: Yeah, because that was something that one of our, that our geology professor was interested in.

Rodolfo: Well the water stays too long there, and it will kill everything you know, the grass, the weeds, whatever is there.

Joshua: I think Cecilia has cows, doesn't she?

Abby: Yes.

Joshua: That'll change the land. When you put cows on it, they just walk all over it and make (inaudible) and stuff like that.

John: And during hurricane Beulah, were you around like in the farm?

Rodolfo: Beulah?

John: Yeah. Do you remember anything like, did hurricane Beulah change anything on the farm?

Rodolfo: Well, there was water all over.

Abby: She brought a lot of flood, right?

Rodolfo: Yeah. There was a lot of water, everything around here was flooded. It didn't go in the house, but it was flooded here.

Abby: How high was the flooding?

Rodolfo: Just around the houses. But it drained out because of the drain ditch.

John: Oh ok. And how old were you when you first started working on the farm?

Rodolfo: Well, since we had chores (laughing). We had chores in the farm you know, we had to feed the cows and pigs and chickens.

John: So, you were real small when you started, right?

Rodolfo: Well, since I was about 6 years old.

John: What did your family first grow on your land?

Rodolfo: Oh, I can't tell you that. I was too small. I was probably 1 or 2 years old. I don't remember.

John: Oh ok, well what do you remember growing on the farm when you were older?

Rodolfo: Cabbage, carrots, green beans-

Celsa: Tomatoes.

Rodolfo: Bell peppers, tomatoes, corn, grain.

John: What kind of livestock did you all raise?

Rodolfo: Well, in the farm we had horses, cows, and pigs, goats.

John: Was there a reason for having all those animals?

Rodolfo: Well it was like, self-contained farm. Everything we use there. The cows, we would milk them and the pigs. We would slaughter them for later on.

Abby: Bacon (laughing).

Rodolfo: And the eggs from the chickens and we ate chickens.

John: Did you ever sell your livestock?

Rodolfo: Sometimes.

John: Ok. Well, when you all were selling the vegetables that you all had and the livestock, did the people who were buying all that stuff, did that change what you all were selling or growing?

Rodolfo: Yes. Well, the thing is we would take the crop or vegetables to the packing shed and they would buy it there at the beginning and they started to raise their own, the packing sheds, and then we had to go out there and make a contract with them so that we can raise this and that. Griffin and Brand was one of them. There was several of them, but I cannot remember right now.

John: Oh, it's fine. Well, you made contracts with those packing sheds?

Rodolfo: Yes.

John: Do you remember what they had you change to? What they were looking for specifically, like in crops and livestock?

Rodolfo: Well, sometimes they would ask if you can plant some carrots or cabbage you, and they would give you a contract. Then we plant so many acres of whatever they give you. They would plant some of it or growers around or farmers around would plant some and they would say, let's say a hundred acres and they give us 20 acres to one and 20 acres to another

John: Oh really?

Rodolfo: Yes, to raise cabbage or whatever they wanted.

John: So, you would give them 20 acres, or they would tell you use these 20 acres to-

Rodolfo: Yes, so you can raise the cabbage or carrots or bell pepper or cauliflower or you know.

John: Oh ok, so did any other natural disasters affect your crops like freezes or droughts?

Rodolfo: Yes.

John: do you remember how or what did you all do when that happened?

Rodolfo: We would just wait it out until next time or plant something else if it rains or something else. Sometimes you lose it and or you have insurance and they will pay you. But it's not much you know, it's just to keep on going.

John: So, were there Braceros working on the property?

Rodolfo: Yes.

John: Do you know what changes they had to work with? In the field?

Rodolfo: Cotton. I think we had 90.

Abby: Yeah, on Monday they actually showed us, your brother, he showed us, like to weigh it.

Rodolfo: Oh, the scale

Abby: Yes, it was really old fashioned. You could still see the numbers on the side. It was pretty cool.

John: Do you remember anything from when they cleared the land?

Rodolfo: here? No, it was already clear.

John: Did they tell you how they did it?

Rodolfo: No, no, here it was already cleared. We never asked. Because what we cared about was just to farm.

John: What kind of machinery did you use through the years like on the farm?

Rodolfo: Cotton pickers and combines. To harvest the grain and the corn. Cotton pickers for the cotton. That's about it and the tractors we had.

John: How many tractors did you all have back then?

Rodolfo: Back then when my dad was still here, about 3 or 4.

John: Do you all have any pictures of the tractors or anything like from back then?

Rodolfo: I have pictures, not from back then, they are a little more modern.

Joshua: Wait, didn't you all take a picture with the first tractor you all bought together?

Rodolfo: Well yeah, but Janie has them. And she has some pictures of us 5 brothers farming together.

John: Oh ok. How did you all utilize irrigation, and did you witness the evolution of irrigation on your farm?

Rodolfo: Well, to irrigate, you know, we made a canal over the side 'cause they use to have pipes you know the canals, and now they are underground pipes and we get the water from there. From falcon dam. Not from the river, but you know it comes from the dam.

John: well, dealing with the crops, did you use pesticides?

Rodolfo: Yeah, back then yeah.

John: Did it have an effect on you all and the workers?

Rodolfo: No. That we had to go the hospital? No.

John: Did anyone ever complain about the pesticides? Like the growers, no, I mean the consumers, the people buying your crops?

Rodolfo: No.

John: Oh ok, did you hunt animals on your farm that were pest?

Rodolfo: Aqui no. It was just all farming. But we hunted away from here you know.

John: On the farm there wasn't any animals that were disturbing the farm or the crops?

Rodolfo: Just the cows and goats sometimes, they would get loose from the neighbors, that's about it. Once in a while, you know, back then, years back when they made this ditch, the drain ditch, there was some deer's coming through there but that was because they were lost. There was a little bit more brush here, not far from here. And then they knocked it down and they planted a lot of citrus and trees.

John: Oh ok. And what about birds like grackles or-

Rodolfo: Oh, you want some? We got plenty of those. (Chuckling)

John: Did you all hunt them or shoot them?

Rodolfo: Well sometimes, here, because they come here and do their mess and they stay there. They eat whatever is out here. If I have fish, they eat them.

Joshua: Oh, speaking of animals, he has bats in these pipes.

Abby: Oh wow.

John: Inside the pipes?

Joshua: Yes. As soon as the sun goes down, they come out.

Rodolfo: They will come out in a little while. But they don't do anything.

Abby: They just kind of fly around.

Joshua: Yes, we never have problems.

Rodolfo: Exactly.

Joshua: The occasional low flying bat kind of goes over your head sometimes.

Abby: Oh, and you're like what?

Joshua: Yeah.

Rodolfo: They fly real fast. They are there though, eating bugs. You can see them out there, over there on the other side of the fence in the air.

John: Flying around.

Rodolfo: You know, going around looking for bugs.

John: During World War 2, during that time, did it have any effect on the crops you were selling?

Rodolfo: I don't know. Like I said, I was 1 year or 2 years old.

John: Do you know if your family was asked, like your father, was asked to destroy any crops or anything like that?

Rodolfo: Just cotton. You know, they gave us a limit that when you pick cotton, you had to destroy it.

John: Oh, I didn't know that.

Rodolfo: Yeah. If you didn't destroy it back then, they would fine you.

Abby: So, Ralph is the oldest?

Rodolfo: Yes.

Abby: Where are you, in terms of your siblings?

Rodolfo: I'm the youngest of the boys.

Abby: The youngest of the boys.

Rodolfo: We are 6. 6 altogether, I am the youngest. 4 sisters, behind me.

Abby: 4 sisters.

Rodolfo: Janie is one of them.

Abby: I think it's pretty cool that you guys all live along here.

Rodolfo: Yeah, most of them. And there is some over there on 23rd and 107 on the right-hand side, most of that area.

Abigail Espinoza: When have you been a member of the USDA?

Rodolfo Luna: Ever since we started farming, I guess, cotton all that-Ralph was working there-

Abigail Espinoza: Who you said?

Rodolfo Luna: Ralph

Abigail Espinoza: Ralph

Rodolfo Luna: (nods head) Mhmm, he was working there at the USDA.

Abigail Espinoza: Was he the one that was more involved with the organization?

Rodolfo Luna: Well, no, my brother Romulo, the second brother. He passed away.

Abigail Espinoza: My condolences.

Rodolfo Luna: Then Ramon took over when he passed away as administrator.

Abigail Espinoza: Do you remember what they offered?

Rodolfo Luna: What?

Abigail Espinoza: The organization. What they have to offer.

Rodolfo Luna: The USDA?

Abigail Espinoza: (nods head) Mhmm

Rodolfo Luna: With programs. You know, they-like right now I came from the program, you know they have programs there that if you don't meet the level of the crop, lets say they give you a thousand pounds and after if you don't make a thousand pounds whatever you make eight hundred they'll sub divide you and will help you with that two hundred pounds. You know programs like that. Disasters-

Abigail Espinoza: The insurance that you were talking about?

Rodolfo Luna: No USDA.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh, the USDA.

Rodolfo Luna: The insurance if you have insurance too, you know, it will do the same thing. But there's different programs over there at USDA. They got a whole bunch of programs, to me they helped me one of them helped me to level this land (looked over his shoulder towards the back of his yard) the program, you know, helped me and uh, over there at [unclear] uh I put in a CRP for ten years with the government it's another program they'll pay you.

Abigail Espinoza: a CRP?

Rodolfo Luna: CRP.

Joshua Valadez: It's where you let the land kinda regrow-

Rodolfo Luna: For wildlife

Abigail Espinoza: Oh, okay.

Rodolfo Luna: They'll let you for ten years. You can't touch it for [every?] ten years

Abigail Espinoza: So, there's a variety of programs in the organization.

Rodolfo Luna: Yes.

Abigail Espinoza: So, it kind of, answered this question, how have they helped and contributed to your farmland, or to yourself? They obviously helped you, you know, leveling out this land.

Rodolfo Luna: Leveling the land.

Rodolfo Luna: They gave us so much funds, and they uh, whoever the farmer wanted to do that leveling the land they'll, let you know...

Abigail Espinoza: They'll help?

Rodolfo Luna: They'll level the land until the funds are out.

Abigail Espinoza: Mhmm

Rodolfo Luna: Until next year.

*We then proceeded to go inside Mr. Luna's house to finish up the rest of the interview because of the mosquitoes outside.

Abigail Espinoza: So, the organization the USDA is actually very involved at UTRGV-

Rodolfo Luna: Mhmm

Abigail Espinoza: The University. What advice do you have to offer to students who are able to learn through the organization?

Rodolfo Luna: Well they can learn a lot of things. How to raise crops, and programs they have, and if they want to be ranchers, farmers, or whatever, you know they'll help you.

Abigail Espinoza: It's a good opportunity

Rodolfo Luna: Yeah

Abigail Espinoza: Yes, especially you don't really hear like, now students wanting to agriculture-

Rodolfo Luna: Mhmm no

Abigail Espinoza: They don't wanna be in it, so I think it's you know still important keep it up-

Rodolfo Luna: Farmers who get in extinct, you know, there are few farmers around here right

Abigail Espinoza: Yeah

Rodolfo Luna: There's not many now.

Abigail Espinoza: Especially with all the expansion of-of buildings and homes.

Rodolfo Luna: Well I think, you know, the old farmers you know that, they had- were farming, they had kids they would go to college and they wouldn't come back.

Abigail Espinoza: (nods head) Mmm.

Rodolfo Luna: They'd stay over there. And that's why they're selling the land.

Abigail Espinoza: Selling the land.

Rodolfo Luna: 'Cause you know, they're getting old.

Abigail Espinoza: Mhmm. Are you involved with the Church?

Rodolfo Luna: Yes

Abigail Espinoza: Yes?

Rodolfo Luna: (chuckles) Not much you know, but I-I still do.

Abigail Espinoza: Catholic Church, right?

Rodolfo Luna: Yes

Abigail Espinoza: Catholic. Were you ever a part of the Knights of Columbus?

Rodolfo Luna: No.

Abigail Espinoza: Did any Luna family members serve on any Board of Directors with the agriculture organizations?

Rodolfo Luna: Not on the Board, but just my brother Ralph is the one that worked with the USDA.

Abigail Espinoza: More, closely right?

Rodolfo Luna: Yeah, he was working there.

Abigail Espinoza: Uhm...so continuing further with your farming history, can you tell me more about the services that were offered to you guys like the packing sheds?

Rodolfo Luna: Just like I tell you, there's the packing sheds took over and you go out there and ask what we can farm, we can raise carrots or cabbage whatever you know and they will

tell you “yeah we want for you to raise carrots”, or whatever-whatever they want, or whatever you wanted to raise.

Abigail Espinoza: And you would raise them?

Rodolfo Luna: Yeah, and then take it to them and they would pay whatever they took.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh okay, so it’s like the exchange of goods and services basically?

Rodolfo Luna: Mhmm, right.

Abigail Espinoza: How are the interactions with the farm assistance associations? The interactions are they- good?

Rodolfo Luna: Yes

Abigail Espinoza: Yes? For the most part?

Rodolfo Luna: Mhmm.

Abigail Espinoza: Uhm, did you experience with the shipping via the railroad stations in Edinburg-

Rodolfo Luna: Mmm no.

Abigail Espinoza: No problems.

Rodolfo Luna: Mmm no.

Abigail Espinoza: So, they pretty much cooperated-

Rodolfo Luna: Just the packing sheds.

Abigail Espinoza: The packing sheds?

Rodolfo Luna: Yeah, well we took the product to them and they would ship it.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh, and they would ship it. Oh, okay okay.

Rodolfo Luna: They would ship it.

Abigail Espinoza: Do you cooperate with other farming families in Edinburg?

Rodolfo Luna: Just friends.

Abigail Espinoza: Friends?

Rodolfo Luna: Yes

Abigail Espinoza: Oh, which ones are you closest too?

Rodolfo Luna: What

Abigail Espinoza: Which farming family, yeah are you-

Rodolfo Luna: There's hardly any. Well I have a friend here on [unclear] uh on uh McColl and Schunior.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh okay.

Rodolfo Luna: Right there on the corner of McColl

Abigail Espinoza: Mhmm

Rodolfo Luna: Big house at the ranch it's right there.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh okay. And do you partner up or it's just you guy's solo?

Rodolfo Luna: No no, just friends...sometimes if you wanna borrow something from us we'll let him, and we'll borrow something from him. That's about it.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh okay.

Rodolfo Luna: Tools, not the tractors.

Abigail Espinoza: (laughs) Not the tractors, and I was just gunna say like, "the tractors?"

Rodolfo Luna: (chuckles) no.

Abigail Espinoza: Yeah, I was seeing them on Monday, they're, like huge. I never thought like, I mean I'm not-I'm new to the whole like farming perspective, but when I saw those tractors, I was like I didn't even know they could be that big.

Rodolfo Luna: Oh, and they're small. These ones are small.

Abigail Espinoza: (laughs)

Rodolfo Luna: Yeah. They're bigger than that

Abigail Espinoza: They're bigger than that?!

Rodolfo Luna: Oh yeah.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh my gosh. Yeah, they were saying that they were to- that those were for wheat and corn? I believe they told us.

Rodolfo Luna: Oh, those the combines.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh, the combines?

Rodolfo Luna: Yeah, those [are] the combines. Yeah, they're huge, and they're bigger than that.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh my gosh.

*Those were the end of my questions, but we still stayed to talk a bit more with Mr. Luna and his family.

Rodolfo Luna: It's incredible what they have now. You know. You know it's all the inside; is computerizing everything. They got GPS you know uh programs-

Joshua Valadez: Just plug it in and just sit back

Rodolfo Luna: Just sit back-

Abigail Espinoza: And let technology do the stuff for you (Laughs)

Rodolfo Luna: Don't touch the steering wheel or the break. Just stay there and it'll go by itself.

Abigail Espinoza: (laughs) It's crazy, yeah.

Rodolfo Luna: The cotton picker, oh man it's something else too you know. Lot of different than what we had

Joshua Valadez: You don't have to do anything just push a button and-

Abigail Espinoza: And it does the work for you? (laughs)

Rodolfo Luna: You just-it'll program it and it'll go by itself. It'll tell you; you know when you turn around and if you don't turn around where you're suppose to turn put it in reverse and it'll go by itself and then it'll straighten and take off.

Abigail Espinoza: It will reroute you.

Rodolfo Luna: Mhmm.

Abigail Espinoza: And you never pictured yourself living anywhere else but the Valley?

Rodolfo Luna: (shakes head) No

Abigail Espinoza: I like the Valley too.

Joshua Valadez: It has its own culture.

Abigail Espinoza: It does. I always see the Valley like-like in its own bubble.

Joshua Valadez: We're so far from everything else. We just kinda made our own thing I mean from here to Sa- there's no civilization from here to Falfurrias, so we just kinda do our thing here.

Abigail Espinoza: Yup.

Rodolfo Luna: Well we used to- here in the Valley we used to raise a lot of vegetables. A lot of them. Lots of vegetables...around here. Lots of farmers, like subdivisions, you know like I said, there's farmers that quit, they sold the land.

Joshua Valadez: They used to farm where Peter Piper is all that area.

Abigail Espinoza: Yes, they had told us in the beginning that that was your guys land.

Joshua Valadez: They used to farm all the way down there, and I remember going to De La Viña and seeing them behind our school, on the tractors, seeing my grandpa on the tractor outside-

Abigail Espinoza: Aww.

Joshua Valadez: I was out there playing recess stuff like that, seeing him out there driving around. Then over here at HEB, [asking Mr. Luna] you used to rent there right?

Rodolfo Luna: Mhmm yeah.

Joshua Valadez: They would rent, well from where Hacienda Ford is, just that house behind Hacienda Ford that has the horses from there all the way to the front of HEB that used to be all field. And they used to rent there and farm there.

Abigail Espinoza: That was your land too?

Rodolfo Luna: No, it was not ours, we rent it.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh yeah, yeah.

Rodolfo Luna: We rented it.

Joshua Valadez: Now all that is turning into houses-

Rodolfo Luna: Most of the altogether we had 200 acres- 250 acres here- ours and then the rest was farming. We used to farm what 1500 acres, you know, growing vegetables, pickles, you know.

Abigail Espinoza: And would you ever farm citrus?

Rodolfo Luna: Citrus?

Abigail Espinoza: (nods head) Citrus.

Rodolfo Luna: No, we didn't plant any citrus.

Abigail Espinoza: So, you weren't- your family wasn't affected with the-the freeze of... '82 I believe? There were two freezes, yeah I think there was one of '82...

Rodolfo Luna: Yeah, I think- we had one- that year we had cabbage and would crack and yeah it was no good because of the freeze. The water would get it a little moisture and then it would just turn into ice and it would just pop.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh no.

Rodolfo Luna: Mhmm. It's... we've had ups and downs you know.

Abigail Espinoza: Mhmm.

Rodolfo Luna: We've lost crops too, you know that sometimes they, they say we planting 100 acres and we lose 10 acres because they couldn't come and harvest it. So, it would spoil. It gets too big or you know, they couldn't use it.

Abigail Espinoza: Depending on the...on how much damage there was to the crops, uhm that's where they would see if you would need the assistance or not? 'Cause sometimes if it wasn't enough- like if there wasn't that much damage, you guys just lost the crop, right?

Rodolfo Luna: Well, sometimes, you know, the USDA would help us too, you know help a little bit, not much they had programs there.

Joshua Valadez: When I was a kid, they used to farm a lot of watermelon.

Rodolfo Luna: Yeah.

Joshua Valadez: For a while you guys were planting a lot of watermelon.

Rodolfo Luna: Cantaloupes, onions, you know most of everything. We stopped farming those because of the surroundings of the houses and everything.

Abigail Espinoza: Yeah, I'm from Alamo and, well, there's a Wal-Mart in Alamo and before that was being built it was a strawberry field, and I remember when I was small, like the farmer who would farm the strawberry fields would give us like a little basket and we would go pick like the strawberries. But then like, it was like later that we saw Wal-Mart had bought the land, and I was so bummed because I wanted to keep on picking strawberries. (Laughs)

Rodolfo Luna: Well you know, the money what they offer you is- you can't resist sometimes. If you're about to you know say 'I'm gunna quit,' or you lost a crop or something, you know, they'll offer you so much money and say 'oh well...'

Rodolfo Luna: *Todo*, where is Pan-American, you know the stadium out there, where the Broncos or the Road Runners used to be?

Abigail Espinoza: Oh yeah.

Rodolfo Luna: We used to farm that for a long time. All around there where the gym is, *todo eso*, just across too. Not too long, my brother was farming on the north side of the Road Runners stadium. But they sold it now to Pan-American.

Abigail Espinoza: Oh, are they? Well I hope 'cause there's not enough parking.

Abigail Espinoza: It's a really cool experience that I mean, I'm happy that I'm taking this class because it's kinda different when taking like written tests or having to do the Scranton.

Rodolfo Luna: A lot of people don't know that the chickens- the only chicken they know is Kentucky Fried Chicken. (Laughs) But they don't know where they come from. You know especially alive. They probably see it on TV or whatever *pero* in real life.

Abigail Espinoza: In real life they're like 'wooooow.' (Laughs)

Abigail Espinoza: Well thank you so much Mr. Luna, thank you guys too for inviting us inside your house. We will be uhm transcribing, writing the interview down, and then I believe we give them back to you to see if there's any changes that you guys want to make before it's fully published.

Appendix U

Interviewee: Ralph Luna, Eloisa Luna, Janie Navarro, and Norma Rydl

Interviewer Team: Rafael Martinez & Julio Smith

Date: Monday October 22, 2018

Location: The home of Ralph Luna in Edinburg, Texas

Transcribers: Rafael Martinez & Julio Smith

This interview was conducted with Ralph Luna, Eloisa Luna, Janie L. Navarro, and Norma Rydl in home of Ralph Luna in the living/dining room. Throughout the interview Eloisa, Janie and Norma would assist Ralph by adding in any information he was not clear on. The team conducting the interview consisted of Rafael Martinez and Julio Smith. This interview aims to give insight into the Luna Family's family and farming history.

Rafael: Okay, so today is Monday October 22, 2018 and it is 3:49 pm. We are here today with in the home of Ralph Luna in Edinburg Texas. Present for this interview is interview is Ralph Luna,

Norma: Rydl

Rafael: Luna

Janie: Janie L. Navarro

Rafael: Janie Navarro, with Julio Smi...

Eloisa Luna: Eloisa Luna

Rafael: And Eloisa Luna

Julio: Julio Smith

Rafael: Julio Smith and Rafael Martinez. All right and first question, what did you and your family do before [they were] farming here in Edinburg?

Ralph: They lived in Sullivan city, or [now] Los Ebanos. They worked in a ranch and they farmed/planted cotton and corn and they had a herd of goats. They raised goats and they would sell the cabritos. They were 50 cents each at the time and they had quite a bit of goats and a few cows. My dad would get payed for... clearing brush for new crop land, that's what they did... before [my dad went into farming].

Rafael: What year is this?

Ralph: It was in 1926 up to 1933. They did very well because... at that time they had a lot [of] big ranches and they had plenty of work. I understand it was [the depression] during that time in the 1930's. They didn't have sugar, or flour, they were [limited] in flour for tortilla

or corn and that was during the depression. My grandmother, my dad's mother, said that they would harbor the corn, the hubs, not the hubs, the Spiga

Janie: Where it blooms

Ralph: Where it blooms you know the corn, Spiga

Norma: The corn silk I call it

Ralph: Silk! The corn silk and they would grab that and would make flour out of it. They don't do that now, they use the corn but at that time they didn't have enough flour to make tortillas with, so they would get the...

Rafael: The husk?

Norma: No

Ralph: The top of the corn

Rafael: Oh okay

Ralph: They would grab it and take all the little seeds; they would smash it and make tortillas out of it. They would buy the sugar you know like raw, its brown before it's been...

Norma & Janie: Processed

Ralph: Processed, so they would buy the bags of sugar, that was way back in the 30's. [That was during the] depression, but they had plenty of meat from cattle, chicken, and cabritos. They had meat to eat but the problem was making tortillas or bread. Then the depression was over, and they left back to Mexico

Rafael: Back to Mexico!?

Ralph: Yes! Back to Mexico in 1933

Rafael: Okay alright for my next question, how did natural disasters like hurricanes, the freeze affect the farm?

Ralph: Well, in 1930 I remembered my dad talking about they had a big storm, with a lot of hail, it killed several horses and cattle. The hailstorm was that strong.

Ralph: It killed cattle and goats and [they hadn't had] a storm like that. The only thing that he ever talked about [was] the hail broke their windows, I guess that would be about 1 I wasn't born yet...

Rafael: Okay, and besides the tractor what other machinery was important on the farm... when you were on it?

Ralph: When?

Rafael: Whenever you were on it

Ralph: My dad, they started with horses and mules and that was in 1926 with mules to farm. My dad didn't buy the first tractor 'till 1942 and He had to apply, he had to get in line to buy a tractor from the government, so he had to put his name [on a list]. He was farming with [only] 2 mules and 2 horses, he would plant the corn and cotton and tomatoes. He would work with plows by hand [manual]

Rafael: Yes.

Ralph: Then in 1942 he bought the first tractor, but [he still had to apply] because there [were] so many in line [that wanted a tractor, but no dealership.]

Janie: Ranchers

Ralph: The government would let you buy a tractor you [still] had to get in line, so when my dad's name came up, he bought one, and from then on he had it made because he could farm with a tractor and he could do more plowing and disking and [accomplished more].

Janie: He did have a truck? At the beginning

Ralph: hmm?

Janie: He had a truck!?

Ralph: No, not yet. [The] truck, he bought it when he bought the tractor. No! he bought the truck first and then he bought the tractor

Janie: Yes, that's what I meant.

Rafael: When you bought the tractor, like he bought it out of his own pocket or did he... did the government help?

Ralph: They told him he [could pay] it in payments

Janie: Credit

Ralph: You see he applied for a tractor but then he gave so much but he already bought a truck because he was a worker, hand worker, [laborer] irrigating and hoeing.

Norma: Laborer.

Ralph: He was picking fruit and then he... said, well this is too much. I have to do something, so he borrowed some money to buy a truck, he said there was another friend of his that lived in Edinburg and he was working [with him]. He said to him, if ... I buy a truck and you have a driver's license; I buy a truck and you can be my driver, they agreed so he bought the truck, borrowed the money... from a man n-named Mr. Garza from La Joya. He

borrowed the money and some calves for him to sell and then he sold the calves and then he paid the truck [off] he was hauling fruit already. That was during the war and he was doing really well with that. He had enough money to buy a tractor so then dad kept the truck [for]... hauling fruit and he started farming more because he had a tractor [from] then on he accelerated to buying more land. That's when he bought the first 80 acres

Janie: okay, on the truck you hauled corn?

Ralph: Yes...

Janie: You hauled corn to San Antonio

Ralph: That was later...

Janie: oh okay!

Ralph: That's after he bought the 80 acres... he was hauling the fruit and getting paid and he was making money so that's when he bought a tractor and then he bought the 80 acres where we live now.

Ralph: Where my brother lives now, Roberto, where you all are going [to observe]. My dad did well. He started buying then he bought these 20 acres here [where] I live on 20 acres [on Hoehn and Chapin]. Then he bought another 100 acres where Janie lives [on 23rd and Sprague]. Then he bought 40 acres over there where...

Ralph: Its 107...

Ralph: Jackson, right on the corner...

Ralph: Peter Piper

Julio: Yes, yes yeah yeah everything's there

Ralph: My dad, bought [the 40 acres] in the 1950's. He would take me to college every morning and he said, "I wanna buy that land and I wanna buy that land." Trees had frozen [that year] and he said "I wanna buy that land" and I kept telling him, "It's too much money, it's too much money!" That time it was too much money because that's when the hamburgers were a nickel.

Rafael & Julio: [chuckle]

Ralph: Then one day after he told me several times I said, "let's go find out [how much they want for the land]." He hadn't told me he had the money [chuckles]. He went and talked to Mr. Polish the owner. Mr. Luna if you buy the land, my dad said I'll give you \$7,000 down and [Mr. Polish said], "I will clear the land knock all the dead trees and clear all the dead tree and make it ready for you to farm. Then my dad said, "How much are you gonna give me the payments per year?" My dad said, "I'll pay you within a year", and the man just shookhis head and said, "well if you pay me in a year, I'll give you a brand-new Stetson

hat!” Dad went right away and planted a block of cabbage made a big round plot and threw all the seed there and the cabbage all came out and he watered the cabbage and then within about I think a month and a half he pulled all the cabbage completely and then placed the cabbage by the road. He hired some people, [they were paying \$1 a row] rows were 1,200 ft long and he was paying people to plant the cabbage.

Ralph: I remember that even girls where working there planting well they needed work... Dad planted the other 15 acres. [25 acres of cabbage and he planted the other 15 acres with tomatoes]. Sure, enough when the tomatoes and cabbage came out at the same time...He really got the money, they were paying \$200 dollars a ton and never before had the cabbage price been so... so high, the government needed the cabbage to feed the soldiers...

Ralph: They were even buying the little cabbage heads you cut it off and they would sprout again.

Ralph: They would buy that after the first [that harvest, the little cabbage]. My dad got the money, went and payed the man. All the money that he owed, he got [his hat] so that was great he never had had such a great hat. He was a very good farmer because he would plant and sell carrots by the acres and he would do real well in carrots.

Rafael: Speaking of farming, at any time did y’all ever use pesticides?

Ralph: Yes!

Rafael: And like did it ...

Ralph: We had to use [it] for the boll weevils...

Janie: Cotton

Ralph: Cotton for the boll weevil and we used to put the pesticide on the cabbage for the worms and the tomatoes. We used to spray, but at that time he had to go buy it, I don’t know what kind of pesticide he would use but it was in regulation because they had to give him permission to put it [on the crops]. The DN DNT, they took that one away from the tomatoes and then they did away with pesticides, I remember that, but they would use less for the worms, so they won’t eat the vegetables.

Rafael: Okay, and earlier you mentioned that workers, y’all used braceros?

Ralph: At that time no, [they were] citizens. When they planted the cabbage...

Rafael: mmhmm

Ralph: Dad would use people from town that would irrigate you could find workers at that time that lived in town. They would work in the fields but then in 19...1950’s, he started using workers like Braceros at that one time he had 90. We had 90 Braceros and they would come here for just about 2 months and then he would [employ] about 8 or 9 from that group. To work all year round, he would [work on getting] them papers to come and he would

renew them every 6 months. He picked the ones that he knew how to work and they had families [in Mexico] a lot of them stayed here, married here, now they have families well educated, but their parents use to be braceros.

Rafael: What kind of packing sheds would you use and how was your business relationship with them?

Ralph: Well I remember Stevens Produce, R&R Produce in Edinburg and there were several packing sheds. I remember we would take the boxes and they would pay dad by the quality of tomatoes to see how good they were. They would get in top of the truck and the buyer would have said I'll give so much a pound and dad would have the boxes and they would look [at the] tomatoes and dad already knew when we had the workers picking them he knew what size of tomatoes to pick. He would tell them what he wanted, and he would put them in a box and then he would take them to the shed and then they get on top of the truck and inspect the product and if it was good they would give him a good price.

Rafael: You said earlier that you would transport all the stuff with a truck?

Ralph: A truck!

Rafael: Like a regular truck?

Ralph: Regular truck, it just used to work during the months when the fruit was harvested from October -November, December, January the fruit truck would be working on that, then he would use it on hauling cotton, no the cotton was mostly hauled by pick up and trailer in the big truck we used to take big loads. For the tomato we used the big truck because we had boxes, they would fill up the boxes and tie them up, and then we went and sell it, they would dump the boxes with tomatoes at the sheds and they had people grading the tomatoes. The bad ones they would throw them away and they would keep the ones that worked. Then the grader in the packing shed would classify it. Right there they would pack them in boxes and automatically send them up North to where they didn't have tomatoes.

Rafael: And right now, I know Roberto is still farming but is there anybody else still farming in the family?

Rafael: Here in Edinburg?

Ralph: Yes! Roberto.

Rafael: And that's where we're going?

Ralph: Yes, after this interview. He has farms in San Manuel, and McCook. Around here he is the main farmer. My other brothers [Ramon, Rodolfo, Refugio] they were all working together but they...

Janie: Have retired

Ralph: Have retired but they keep just their own lands and probably a few others, and Roberto's not the owner of all the land he farms. He rents from other people.

Rafael: And what crops do they...?

Ralph: Now he was planting, let me see what he plants. He plants mainly corn, grain and sorghum...

Ralph: This year he is only going for corn and grain. The watermelon, cabbage and carrot take more work; you have to irrigate them more times. And the corn, He likes the corn because he only irrigates twice. This land around here is irrigated, and he farms a lot. He depends a lot on rain. It's dry land, but he works his land and then saves the moisture for about February and then he plants in February and that moisture will bring it [the crop], and then if he gets more rain then he'll get a good crop, but if he doesn't get rain during the crop well he'll make money but not as much as when he gets good rain like this year. He takes his 2 combines [big tractors] and they keep on working everyday through weeks hauling in trucks.

Janie: Its mainly right now that he goes for grain and corn

Rafael: Oh, Okay!

Ralph: But this year he's left well actually this area is getting too much...

Janie: Residential

Ralph: Residential areas and he has one [area], the Edwoods he's farming that land 60 acres but now they got it for sale.

Norma: The one that you saw right here coming on Schunior and Hoehn.

Rafael: mmhmm

Rafael: In the future, do you see the Lunas still farming?

Ralph: Oh yes! Definitely, not like mine my children.

Ralph: I'm a rancher now.

Rafael: Mm okay, and you mentioned your job with the government, how did you get your job with the USDA?

Ralph: I started as a crop reporter reporting [farming acreage]. The government has a program where they pay the farmers. They tell you; you can plant so many acres of cotton and if you are over you have to destroy it, I had to report that. I started working as a reporter and I wound up being a supervisor where I had 10 people under me. I would tell them where to go and what land to measure and all that, so that's how I started after I came out of the army.

Rafael: Oh okay, and coming from the army, coming back did you go back to farming?

Ralph: I came [back to]... farming. For about 2 years

Rafael: Was it like...?

Ralph: Well I was... My dad was giving me shares, like I was working with him all day and then he would say, well you can farm these 20 acres and whatever you get out of the 20 acres you can make a living. I was making a living out of those shares and I was getting money from the government because I was getting...back payment. You see they wanted me to stay [in the army], but I wanted to be in the farm.

Ralph: I had friends that were from town and continued up to 20 years in the army, but my ambition was to be on the farm. When I went to the army, my other brothers grew up, my dad kept them [farming with him]. I would work with the agricultural department and I would farm a little but then eventually I just left farming, I just became a rancher.

Rafael: Well that's all the questions I have for right now, thank you.

Before I started my [Julio Smith] questioning

Ralph Luna: I want to show you before we leave, that marker. I called the manager of the water district and he said, "I am very interested I didn't know you had a marker there at your place, that's so important I want to go see it." And I said, "Well not today because it's kind of raining, let's do it another day." He said ok, I want to take a picture of it.

Julio Smith: Who Dr. Skowronek?

Norma Rydl: No, the water district.

Julio Smith: Oh, they didn't even know about it.

Norma Rydl: They didn't know it was there.

Ralph Luna: It was a cement canal. It was elevated, and it was built in 1920, about 25 years ago they put it underground, across the street there's still that canal. A part of it.

Norma Rydl: That didn't go under.

Ralph Luna: It's still there where the water goes to the fields.

Julio Smith: Yes.

Ralph Luna: But now they put about 1 about 2 miles of underground pipe, they tore the concrete canal and they put it underground. So, now the water comes through the pipes and it comes through the fields.

Norma Rydl: That used to be our swimming pool. (Laughs)

All: (Laugh)

Ralph Luna: They knocked that concrete canal and they build it in 1920 and it became the water district organization in 1921. They were going to give water to so many fields and they had to pay taxes, for having that canal. They are still charging money; we all pay even if you have a house here.

Julio Smith: Yeah you got to pay the district.

Ralph Luna: Even if you don't have a house here and have a house over there you have to pay.

Julio Smith: Yes, even if it's just a residential home, there going to make you pay. It's like even if you don't have children in school, you still got to pay the school district. (Laughs)

Ralph Luna: Yes (Laughing) Mr. Hoehn over there is a neighbor.

Julio Smith: No no no no thats fine he's fine. I don't mind coming back.

Ralph Luna: Mr. Hoehn came in 1930 and the government gave him to buy 80 acres.

Julio Smith: Sorry, those government funded programs. I wanted to stop when he (Rafael) was asking. Those were government funded programs right

Ralph Luna: Julio, the government started getting people from Kansas, Chicago all that. Families, Anglos they brought them down here. This was all Mexican Americans farming.

Julio Smith: Yeah well it was all Mexican Americans that didn't necessarily have there..

Ralph Luna: Well you know there was a few Anglos mixed but then they brought all these people. 100s. they gave some 40 acres some 100 acres depending on how much they wanted to buy and Mr. Hoehn it's not HOE-IN it's [pronounced] "Hane;" it's German. They lived on the other corner and he's already dead. Long time ago. The road was named after him. He used to plant berry, used to have citrus and he would plant squash.

Julio Smith: Ok yeah.

Ralph Luna: He would call it "calavacitas" because he would plant the squash and take them in wagons to Edinburg to sell and everybody the workers, US citizens here that needed to work they would go and pick his squash. They nicknamed him calavasitas.

Julio Smith: That was his nickname?

Ralph Luna: Yeah. But then he was here, very good friend of mine. He didn't have children. He did had cows, [dairy cows he would milk]. He had citrus trees.

Norma Rydl: He socialized with his neighbors.

Ralph Luna: Oh yeah but he would socialize because he needed help.

All Laughing.

Julio Smith: Usually why you socialize.

Ralph Luna: Yes, and then people just started, Latin Americans, coming from Mexico that wanted to work. Just like my dad, at first he was a worker in the field.

Julio Smith: Ok. Do we have to do the intro again, no right we just start again from where we are at, ok? It's only going to be a couple questions we will do what we can.

Ralph Luna: Anyway, if were a little late it'll be fine. 4:40 is fine.

Julio Smith: Ok. This is Julio Smith. I will be giving my questions to Mr. Ralph Luna. Mr. Luna what were some of the factors in the family locating to the United States in 1925.

Ralph Luna: Well they came over because I guess they would hear that they had a better opportunity if they would come over. And that my grandfather had 7 siblings. And he had already lost three in an epidemic. My dad was only a little boy. Later on in 1924 there were already 7 children and they decided to come over because they wanted a new life. One of them got sick and they took him to the doctor, he had a lot of fever and the air hit him and one of his eyes became completely white. He lost his eye his eyeball became white. Then another child got sick and they just decided to come over.

Julio Smith: Ok and when they decided to come over how many of the siblings decided to come over.

Ralph Luna: 7

Julio Smith: So, all 7 came over?

Ralph Luna: Yeah that's right. They were afraid they were going to get another epidemic like the one when they lost three children. My uncle was only about 6 or 7 months old, when my grandmother says that she took him out to the window, the air hit him, and he lost one eye. They wanted a new life, and they heard from people coming over that it was a good opportunity.

Julio Smith: Would your father ever talk about maybe the Mexican Revolution having anything to do with their decision, maybe from the violence that was going on?

Ralph Luna: They would talk about it a lot. But let's see my dad would talk about people over there that were bandits. That the bandits would come from like Brownsville and because they stayed across the river from Los Ebanos they stayed there with some relatives. Ah that's right (Phone rings in background) they already had relatives here. They came to live with those relatives and from there on they moved across, they stayed there for a couple of weeks and then my dad would tell me that he would talk and there were people that were bandits. They would travel and they would come and ask you for a calf or something to eat

and they knew they were bandits. If you would not give them what they wanted they would come at night and you know carry whatever they wanted.

Julio Smith: Ok, like they would steal it?

Ralph Luna: They would steal it, but that was the only thing that I heard dad talking about. And then the revolution my grandfather on my mother's side he was in the revolution, he was a soldier in Reynosa. My dad didn't talk very much about the revolution.

Julio Smith: Ok yes and then what he did in Mexico.

Ralph Luna: Yes, it was already done. But then I think World War 1 was getting started and that's when the people from here were going back to Mexico then I would hear that because I was probably in the 1st grade and I would hear people moving away and because of the army wanted to take their family to fight and that was the 30s.

Julio Smith: Ok so going back to their homeland in Mexico in 1933, how much did this have to do with the actual American Repatriation or the Great Depression what were your father's factors going back to Mexico?

Ralph Luna: See they had sold everything they were well off, they had some money, well they had enough. They had beds and automobiles and they took off. When they came, first they didn't have anything, when they left and they sold whatever they had, their animals they had money to go to Mexico and get settled. When they got to Mexico, they found out that they were [not able to invest]. The "Ejidos" wanted to be part of their farming, they would tell you what to do. My dad didn't like that at all, he wanted to be independent, so he was the first one to come back. He stayed 8 months and said, "no I'm going back to the United States".

Julio Smith: Did any of the siblings stay over there in Mexico?

Ralph Luna: Yes, they all stayed. My dad was the first one to come back, see he was married already. My dad, my mother, my brother and I came over. Because my grandparents on my mother's side lived here, in Hidalgo. My parents brought two children or nephews with them, they sent them back to Mexico because they were older and wanted to be with the parents. Sure enough, a couple months and my dad's brother the one that was married, his wife was from San Antonio, they had 4 children they decided to come back. Then my grandfather came also with the other 5 siblings later.

Julio Smith: Ok so then they came back to the United States?

Ralph Luna: Yes because of my dad, they came over. They followed my dad.

Julio Smith: And more or less a timeline if your dad came over in 8 months how long would you say before all 7 were here. Just more or less.

Ralph Luna: Within the year.

Julio Smith: Oh, so within a year they all came back.

Ralph Luna: Yes, because my dad worked there in Hidalgo, with cattle, where they bath the cattle for ticks and all that. My dad worked there for a couple months and then within a couple 6 or 7 months, they all came back. The other brother with 4 children, he came to Edinburg and he found work in Edinburg working in the farms, he found a house and then my grandfather came over with his 5 children. My dad moved from Hidalgo where he was working and came to Edinburg because he wanted to be close to his family. He knew some farmers and they would hire them to irrigate and harvest whatever they had.

Julio Smith: I'm going to follow up on Rafael's question, do you remember your father talking about any individual braceros, maybe one or two that stood out? Any stories of braceros that stood out that were close to the family maybe they came back, since you said that he would bring them back, maybe one that came back quite a bit of times.

Ralph Luna: Oh yeah well, he had some from the same town that he was born, so he had some that he had gotten several. Of the 90 he would get about 10 to work here all the time, he would get them permission to stay here legally. Like Trump now wants braceros to come in that's what they did at that time that's when Eisenhower got elected. Eisenhower brought the braceros in.

Julio Smith: Yes, well the Braceros were brought in as a program because there were so many people off in the war that there was help needed here.

Ralph Luna: And we never had any problems, with any braceros we got along fine. Dad would let them go on Saturday afternoons to town and Sunday they would go to the movies or buy clothes. Then they would send money to their families and some would go very happy because during that time they would make money in you know to help their families. Some were not married, and some were married.

Julio Smith: Did you personally get to associate with the braceros?

Ralph Luna: Oh yes, I was the one that would weigh their cotton, I was the one that every week would pay them. I was there with them when they would weigh the cotton all day and then send the trailers with cotton everyday and then we would fill 2 or 3 trailers with cotton and when one was filled up we'd get another one. I would take a record of how much they picked every day and on Saturday I would pay them. My dad would pay them, he would sit down with me and I would tell him so and so you know we'd get them and then him. We got along just fine.

Julio Smith: Yeah well, they... I mean you even needed help here. So, it must have been...

Ralph Luna: We never even had to go up North like other families would go to New Mexico.

Julio Smith: OK, your father seemed like he was very economically sound. He knew how to run business take care of his money um we've heard the story on the Stetson hat where he

paid the loan quickly I just heard you tell Rafael about the truck that he borrowed from Mr. Garza and I'm sure that he paid that back as well very quickly..

Ralph Luna: Right away.

Julio Smith: Was this something that was very important to him? Did he instill those values into you guys as children?

Ralph Luna: Yes, because dad's ambition was for us to have an education, because his mother was a teacher in Mexico but his father was illiterate. Didn't know anything about writing or anything and my dad had little schooling so he would tell me that he wanted me to get educated and he wanted all the children like my sisters that he wanted them all to have an education. He didn't want them to be unschooled. You know he didn't have an education, but he was very smart in thinking because one time I remember a big rancher came here and asked dad what college he had gotten too. Laughs. He said my college was here in the self.

Ralph Luna: They were shocked they thought he had a degree, because he was prospering, at that time there were a lot of big farms and they had managers that they overlooked their farms. Mother had a great part in helping my dad because she when she was a young girl, she would help her father work in the fields in Hidalgo, she knew when the cotton, corn and other crops would be planted. She would see the owners when they were going to plant, they would check the ground and they would test it to see how cold or warm it was. Then after a few days they would say now it's time and she knew she had that instinct to know and she would tell dad. She had a lot to do because mother would also help him earn, she would not spend money. Only in the house expenses.

Julio Smith: And that's going to be my last question. How was... Was life frugal, like would you guys not spend a lot of money because your dad wanted to quickly invest the money again and make more money or would you say that you guys were able to spend money and live good and buy the things you wanted to.

Ralph Luna: Well, at that time when I got raised it was just a little shack. We didn't have electricity when I started going to school. No electricity, no gas stove, no radio, nothing. I started school at grade 0, because I didn't know English, I lost a whole year. But when I got to the first grade, I saw some of the boys reading books like funny books, so I started getting some of those. It would cost a penny or something like that or exchange funny books with another. That's the way we would learn, and my dad would sit down with me and he wanted to know what a cow was. Like a vaca, what's the name in English and I had to tell him. I had to find out, I had to teach my dad because he would ask me questions. When my dad was well off already, my sisters started to be born and they had luxury, because they had everything. At that time, we had a TV and we had radio and butane gas stove, and everything was modern, it was a lot different from when I was younger. When I was 6 years old, I would get up and I would start picking cotton with my dad and when my little bag would fill up I would put it in his bag. My brother Lito, the same thing, we would do that so you know if he was going to pick 300 pounds a day maybe we would help him with another 50 or 60 pounds but we worked next to him. And then that's how my dad started he worked out in the sun no air condition. That's another reason why I could tell he wanted us to have an education. [We had very little spending money growing up. Our mother was a great cook.

She would cook good treats and when groceries were bought, she would buy fruits, cereals candy, etc. Our parents taught us to help each other always. Each one responsible for the other, all was share equally. To have the chores done on time and only told to do it once, never paid for chores. Later in years, allowance was good, only for the movies, cokes and burgers.

Appendix V

Interviewees: Norma Luna Rydl, Esther Luna Montemayor

Interviewers: Cullen Turk, and Olga Moya

Interview Setting: October 20, 2018 at Norma Luna Rydl's home, Edinburg, Texas

Norma Luna Rydl and Esther Luna Montemayor are daughters of Ralph and Eloisa Luna. The interview was conducted at Norma's residence, in her kitchen, on a Saturday afternoon. The interview transcriptions discuss hunting, agriculture, religion, heirlooms, and family traditions. There is an insight on how life was for the Luna's growing up, and changes if any within these topics today.

Olga Moya: So, this is Olga Moya.

Cullen Turk: And Cullen Turk.

Olga Moya: Interviewing...

Norma Rydl: Norma Luna Rydl.

Esther Montemayor: Esther Luna Montemayor.

Olga Moya: On October 20th, 2018 on a Saturday at 2pm.

Cullen Turk: 5320 W. Chapin Blvd, Edinburg, Texas.

Cullen Turk: Okay, I'd like to start out with some questions here, umm...okay...so... Hunting. We're going to do hunting right now. Basically, what was hunted? Uh, do you know what kind of weapons they used, how did they harvest their kills? Did they use, did they sell any of their surplus, if y'all hunted a lot of stuff, you fed the family, then did you sell the rest? Um.....were there any rare animals that showed up in your hunting excursions? Ocelots, jaguars or albino, white-tailed deer? Was there anything crazy? Umm.....and who was your family's best hunter and tracker?

Esther: To my knowledge, it would be deer, wild boar and wild pig. They would kill and take the meats to the slaughter (house). They had to the pig and the deer meat mixed. Deer and pig were the main ones hunted.

Cullen: When y'all mean boar, are y'all talking javelina or wild boar?

Norma: The wild pig, the wild boar.

Cullen: Okay, so what about javelina?

Norma: (I don't know)

Cullen: Okay.

Cullen: Ok Norma: Because, there's a lot of trees. They have a lot of the mesquite; they have a lot of the cactus. So, they live there, that's where they nest.

Norma: It's good brush for them, but we didn't hunt those because you have to go in there and look for them. But the uncles, we gave you some pictures, as per Kaitlin, you would see the uncles with their deer.

Cullen: Right.

Cullen: I was going to say, they gave it to the neighbors.

Norma: (Grandma would make it into tamales).

Cullen: Did they...I know they had to kill snakes, rattlesnakes, moccasins, but did they eat them? Did they ever bring home big snakes?

Norma: No.

Cullen: I was going to ask about the turkey.

Norma: they had the wild turkey, but their main game is the deer, they slaughter it themselves. If they wanted deer sausage, they'll take it to the slaughterhouse, and have it done for them.

Cullen: Which slaughterhouse? Do you know?

Norma: De la Garza. De la Garza's slaughterhouse.

Cullen: De La Garza.

Norma: I know, grandfather had a freezer, so once it got it got processed and packaged, the meat would be in the freezer.

Cullen: Were there ever times, like, I guess during floodings where y'all just had a terrible time with mosquitos or bees or fleas? Or that was just happening no matter what?

Norma: It happened no matter what because of the season.

Cullen: It's different chemistry.

Norma: it's your chemical (chemistry).

Cullen: Okay, so when that happened, where y'all blocked off for a while until it dried up?

Norma: Yes, cuz (because) we couldn't go through there.

Cullen: Ok, so...well now that we're into that, so did you all have, were there storms or hurricanes seasons, I guess, that devastated your crops and livestock? That were hard on

y'all and like you didn't know if you were going to make it out of? Or y'all weathered everything pretty well?

Norma: The uncles, there's (they're) the one that had it hard, (because) they are farmers. Dad had a government job (to help).

Cullen: I see.

Norma: So, we managed.

Cullen: Okay.

Norma: The uncles, they lost their crops. 100 acres of carrots.

Cullen: okay, and so, uh...you said you were harvesting grains and cotton...

Esther: No.

Norma: No.

Cullen: corn...and uh...y'all would naturally harvest cactus to make soup or something with it?

Norma: No.

Norma: I know that they had tomatoes.

Cullen: tomatoes.

Esther: watermelon.

Norma: watermelon, oh the uncles had that, the watermelon.

Cullen: watermelon? Gosh, I bet you that was nice in the summertime.

Cullen: uh..squash, any cantaloupe?

Norma: But I think their main crop was the grain (corn).

Esther: cotton.

Cullen: Intermittent crops?

Norma: Yeah, they had corn.

Cullen: I see.

Cullen: He's gonna take his skills and make some money off of it.

Esther: So, he leased from us, 1/4 of the profit and the rest is his.

Cullen: And you said that it was your grandfather that was hired out by the government to go assess damage in other...

Cullen: That's your dad, okay. That's interesting to know.

Norma: That's our dad. He was the (assessor).

Cullen: That's pretty cool.

Cullen: Yeah.

Norma: When he came back [from the army] that's when, he was working with grandfather farming and then got into the government job where it was the USDA office.

Cullen: USDA.

Norma: He would go assess the farmers' lands.

Olga: um-huh.

Norma: But you have twenty-five acres but you're only supposed to have twenty and so the five acres are not going to account.

Cullen: I see.

Norma: He was all over here in the Valley, to measure the fields and look at the fields and uh, make sure the farmers farmed only what they were supposed to.

Cullen: That'll build his knowledge base on everybody else.

Norma: The property of who had what and where you had the lot.

Cullen: Okay, well is there any, this is kind of a silly question, I guess... Any legendary horses or bulls or dogs or pets on the ranch or farm that made an impact on your family? Did you have any famous "Balto"-like dogs that went and saved anybody from a flood or.... Lassie, or anything like that? Nothing heroic or uh...?

Esther: No. My only story is for some reason that roosters didn't like me.

Cullen: Yeah, roosters.

Esther: They would always chase me.

Norma: My grandfather had horses and cattle.

Cullen: Uh-hmm.

Norma: That's where grandmother would get her eggs.

Cullen: Okay, yeah...eggs.

Esther: The story about my grandfather (Apa) coming and saving me. Mom took me to the chicken coup to pick up the eggs and she put me in the corner, well she came back for me and she didn't want to move me 'cause there was a snake right next to me (in a chicken's nest).

Cullen: Uh huh...I was about to ask about snakes.

Esther: Yes, so it just happened that my grandfather got there at that moment (just when) that my mom needed help and...

Cullen: Was it a rattler?

Esther: I don't remember (whispering).

Cullen: You don't remember?

Norma: Probably a water snake or something.

Cullen: Well, but still dangerous.

Norma: Still, any snakes.

Cullen: Your mom would have known, what kind of, whether or not that was a dangerous snake or not, so she told you not to move so it could have been a cottonmouth, or a copperhead, or a rattlesnake. But those are the kinds of stories I like because it personalizes your background. It's not just general background.

Esther: Leaves from an orange tree that has frozen they would save one because that was used for remedies.

Cullen: That's a good nugget of information. That's different. I've never heard that before so that's neat.

Cullen: So, did yall have a little herb garden with rosemary and thyme?

Norma: Just her plants growing and if you had a tummy ache you would go up and get this.

Cullen: Aloe vera, fixes everything...

Norma: Aloe vera.

Esther: Oh, the corn husks, for bladder infection.

Norma: (hair of the corn).

Cullen: Oh...

Norma: We'd boil that for a bladder infection.

Olga: Oh wow.

Cullen: That's interesting, those are the...kinds if things we want.

Norma: And it didn't hurt us...the infection would go away.

Cullen: Yeah.

Norma: I have a (butter churn).

Cullen: Take a picture of it.

Esther: And we would alternate. It was my aunt Cecilia Luna Rios, my brother, my sister, and myself and we would switch to churn the butter.

Olga: Oh wow.

Cullen: Hmm. How long would it take, between like four or five of y'all?

Cullen: Oh yeah.

Esther: It took a while.
(Norma brings in churn)

Olga: Oh, wow!

Cullen: Yeah, ok.

Cullen: Okay, let me ask this, does anybody still do it just for fun?

Norma: No. You have to get fresh milk from the cow.

Cullen: I see.

Cullen: Okay.

Esther: And whenever we wanted meat, Dad...

Esther: Dad would take a cow to get slaughtered to get the meat for the party.

Olga: Oh.

Cullen: Gosh.... Ummm...okay...

Norma: Dad's value, like my (grandfather), is land, because you live off the land.

Cullen: Sure.

Norma: Dad would say, “Invest your money in land.”

Cullen: Uh-huh.

Norma: He passed it (land) down to his family.

Olga: Uh-huh.

Norma: It’s the same with his brothers when they were farming, they all helped each other to establish themselves.

Olga: Uh-huh.

Norma: So that way you helped each other and that’s how the family unit was.

Cullen: Dynasty.

Norma: They had a large family themselves. Then dad, comes from a family of ten.

Cullen: Wow.

Cullen: Well, I think I’m kind of done. The only thing I was gonna ask about any weird tornadoes, lightning strikes...

Esther: Lightning struck and hit a cow (horse) right in front of us, right across the street.

Cullen: Really?

Esther: Uh-huh. And then (one of) the palm trees (got struck). And you could see the burn mark on (side of) the palm tree.

Olga: Wow.

Cullen: So, it hit a cow, right in front of you?

Esther: (Yes).

Cullen: Alright, just, what did that look like?
Esther motions upward and the flat down with her hand.

Cullen: Heh. (Laughing)

Cullen: So, it just keeled over?

Esther: I saw it jump up and then(?) (land)

Cullen: Okay so it didn’t explode or anything...it just, just collapsed?

Norma: It got electrocuted.

Cullen: It jumped up and (krrrg!- dead).Wow!

Cullen: Stay away from storms and chickens (roosters)!

Cullen: Okay I'm gonna pause. My real father was in Vietnam... (Cullen shares personal similar story- taken out of interview).

Cullen: I think I'm done so..I got a lot.

Cullen: I know it was devastating to all agriculture in the Rio Grande Valley. Alright, next?

Olga: Well, I'm gonna focus mainly on religion and heirlooms so my first question is... Was and is religion a big part of your life and your family's life and how was it back then and how is it now?

Norma: Yes, it is. Grandfather, once he would have his harvest (picked) he'd donate to Sacred Heart at Edinburg, Tx. church and also donated to a steeple church where they were from (in Chamaguaro, Guanajuato).

Olga: Uh-huh.

Norma: He would send money for supplies so the parishioners could build it.

Cullen: Wow.

Esther: The first season bale was always donated to the church or taken to the church. Yes, religion, (and) being a Catholic is a very important role in our lives.

Norma: In the community, he would also (share) after the harvest.

Cullen: Y'all don't do that anymore? Heh, cuz I could use some food....

Norma: Not our uncles (plant corn and sorghum).

Esther: Most fields are now subdivisions...

Esther: I'm thinking of what else we had. We had uh, the *moras* (?).

Norma: The mulberries trees.

Norma Luna Rydl: Dad still has figs.

Olga Moya: You had a little bit of everything.

Cullen Turk: Are there more grackles now?

Norma Luna Rydl: Yes!

Cullen Turk: Yeah.

Norma Luna Rydl: Nluckily there's still chakalaka's by here.

Cullen Turk: Yeah.

Olga Moya: Mhmm.

Norma Luna Rydl: Because there's still brush [a shelter for animals].

Olga Moya: So, you're catholic right?

Esther Luna Montemayor: Yes.

Norma Luna Rydl: Yes.

Olga Moya: What church did you go to?

Esther Luna Montemayor, Norma Luna Rydl: Edinburgh Sacred Heart.

Norma Luna Rydl: Grandfather sent some of the kids to parochial school.

Esther Luna Montemayor, Norma Luna Rydl: We also went for a couple of years.

Olga Moya: What religions and traditions.... what religious traditions and rituals did you guys participate in? As in like, holidays, or I know like, they'll have like, churches could have like certain festivals, right?

Esther Luna Montemayor: Kermes!

Esther Luna Montemayor: And I had an incident there in kinder?

Olga Moya: So, have you guys always been catholic, until now too? And your children as well, is it something you enforce?

Esther Luna Montemayor: Yes.

Olga Moya: That's good.

Olga Moya: Do you see changes in religion today, from when you were growing up within the community? Like do you see more pop ups of churches, or less?

Esther Luna Montemayor: I know it's harder for them to keep the youths' attention [and interested].

Olga Moya, Cullen Turk: Mhmm.

Esther Luna Montemayor: So, I've seen a difference from when I went our heads had to be covered not anymore.

Olga Moya: Mhmm.

Norma Luna Rydl: (continues) We believe in prayer.

Cullen Turk: Sure, and rosaries?

Norma Luna Rydl: And the rosaries, yes.

Cullen Turk: Did you all, did you do the nativity scene?

Esther Luna Montemayor: Yes.

Cullen Turk: Yeah, okay.

Olga Moya: Do you guys own anything that, any object that symbolizes anything to you? Or has sentimental value? Or that's been passed down to you guys? If you guys own anything like that.

Cullen Turk: Heirlooms?

Olga Moya: Yeah, heirlooms.

Esther Luna Montemayor: So, you have [Ama's] molcajete, passed down.

Norma Luna Rydl: I have it up there (points to top of cabinets in kitchen) [for decorations].

Cullen Turk: Oh, I don't know what that is, what is that?

Esther Luna Montemayor: [To grind spices].

Norma Luna Rydl: For spices and all that.

Cullen Turk: Oh okay.

Olga Moya: Yeah.

Cullen Turk: Well I don't know if you... what about jewelry or anything? Mom's jewelry? Dad's jewelry?

Esther Luna Montemayor, Norma Luna Rydl: No.

Cullen Turk: (continues) Nothing like that? Watches?

Norma Luna Rydl: I have a sewing machine it's my grandmother's, dad's mom, I don't sew. It was passed on to dad [and I have it. Grandmother sewed her children's clothes.]

Cullen Turk: Yeah.

Olga Moya: Mhmm.

Norma Luna Rydl: And that's a reminder of that.

Cullen Turk: An old washing machine, or wash tub.

Cullen Turk: We're okay, this is back to my stuff, I'm sorry....

Olga Moya: No, you're good.

Cullen Turk: (continues) but this popped into my head, were girls allowed to shoot? Did you all ever get, did your dad ever or have anybody ever take you out there and teach you how to shoot a firearm or anything?

Esther Luna Montemayor: No.

Cullen Turk: No?

Esther Luna Montemayor: We never asked.

Cullen Turk: I was just wondering.

Cullen Turk: I had another question, so when you all were at these dances, is it mainly Hispanic music at that time were, was like white rock and roll from the 50s coming in or did you all hear that any? Like in Edinburg?

Cullen Turk: Yeah.

Esther Luna Montemayor: Yes, [Sock Hop after the game dances].

Cullen Turk: But out on the ranch you all never played any, you all just stuck to your....

Cullen Turk: Okay, yeah.

Norma Luna Rydl: It was English.

Esther Luna Montemayor: But in the car [we heard Spanish music].

Esther Luna Montemayor: For mom and dad, [we listened to Spanish], we were together, when we were younger [we had no choice. Dad was the one who selected the music].

Cullen Turk: But did you all, as girls were you in love with Elvis or any of that kind of stuff, nah, he was just kind of....

Norma Luna Rydl: I knew who he was, and I liked his songs.

Cullen Turk: Sure.

Norma Luna Rydl: Dad would take me to the dances it was called the Innkeepers dance at the McAllen Civic Center, that's where the dances were especially for my age, in the 70s.

Cullen Turk: Right.

Cullen Turk: Yeah, alright.

Norma Luna Rydl: The tradition was you [feed the men first], then you, and it was okay.

Norma Luna Rydl: They serve the men first, because they had to go to work, and then we got fed.

Cullen Turk: Do you have anything to add to it?

Olga Moya: Yeah if you ladies have anything.

Cullen Turk: Anything you want to say? Remember we're going to publish this story about your family so if you all have things you want to make a statement about your family come out or think about it I'm sure we'll come back to it.

Esther Luna Montemayor: we go to the San Juan shrine to give thanks....

Cullen Turk: Mhmm.

Esther Luna Montemayor: (continues) we light a candle, we also go to San Juditas, and in San Antonio at Lourdes, at Blanco St.

Norma Luna Rydl: (continues) it's very tranquil.

Olga Moya, Cullen Turk: Mhmm.

Cullen Turk: Okay, and this may be kind of a morbid question but what cemetery do you all use? Or do you all have family buried in different places?

Esther Luna Montemayor: Yes, [different places.]

Cullen Turk: Mhmm.

Esther Luna Montemayor: But the [main cemetery.]

Norma Luna Rydl: Valley Memorial.

Cullen Turk: Mhmm, that's where my dad's buried.

Norma Luna Rydl: Our grandparents are there at Valley Memorial.

Esther Luna Montemayor: An uncle, [cousins also.]

Cullen Turk: Mhmm.

Norma Luna Rydl: [We go to the cemetery and], when we go there, we visit the grandparents and family.

Cullen Turk: Yeah.

Norma Luna Rydl: No, but we are very fortunate with our traditions the way we were brought up.

Cullen Turk: Yeah.

Norma Luna Rydl: I mean, it's not something to be ashamed of or to say.

Norma Luna Rydl: Laundry and ironing [was a lot of work].

Cullen Turk: Yeah, I bet you that's...

Norma Luna Rydl: Mon got to help with that, and grandfather was always [clean and pressed],

Norma Luna Rydl: We never [felt we lacked things]. Our faith was there [for us]. We had each other [family].

Esther Luna Montemayor: We have a story with dad buying a cow, uhm, one night he heard the dogs barking but didn't think much of it. The next day he goes to the sale yard and he buys a cow and he has one at home very similar [was his thought.]

Norma Luna Rydl: Identical!

Esther Luna Montemayor: (continues) to that cow [at home.] So, he brings the cow home, his cow is missing. He bought his own cow back. Somebody stole the cow [he's going to investigate...]

Cullen Turk: Yeah.

Olga Moya: Oh my gosh.

Esther Luna Montemayor: (continues) [went back] to the sale yard. It turned out to be a high school kid, you know trying to get some easy money. Which dad, [said] they even put their own name [as the] person selling it. I'm not going to press charges but [he got his money back instead.]

Norma Luna Rydl: All this was dirt road, and so he had the cow grazing outside.

Cullen Turk: That kid should have gotten a whooping.

Olga Moya: (laughs)

Norma Luna Rydl: Dad learned a lot at the cattle exchange because grandfather had cattle.

Olga Moya: Mhmm.

Cullen Turk: Because he's good at it, pretty cool.
[Recording is turned off]

Appendix W

Interviewees: Ralph Luna, and Maria Juanita Luna Navarro, Maria Dolores Luna Vega, Norma Luna Rydl, Teresa Luna Medrano.

Interviewers: Leann Castillo, Caitlyn Rodriguez
At Maria Juanita Luna Navarro's home – Tuesday, October 12, 2018

Ralph and the women of the Luna family were contributors in this interview session. The family tree is discussed and the reasons why grandparents, Antonio Sr. and Dolores Perez Luna, decided to come to the United States. Ralph and his sisters explain how their parents met and what became of them when establishing themselves in the United States.

Leann Castillo: Okay, today is October 12th, 2018 and we are here today at Janie Navarro's home in Edinburg, present for this interview is...

Norma Luna Rydl: Norma Luna Rydl.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Maria Dolores Luna Vega.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Maria Juanita Luna Navarro.

Ralph Luna: Ralph Luna.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Teresa Luna Medrano.

Leann Castillo: First of all I'd like to thank everyone for participating in this, it is pretty much an honor for us to be here, we're very excited to learn about your [parents] story, if any of the questions make you feel uncomfortable, we can stop, we can come back later. [If] you don't want to talk about [it], we can skip it, it is up to you. You are the ones ruling this interview. So, we would like to start off by having your name again as well your date of birth and your age. So, we will start with Norma.

Norma Luna Rydl: I was born September 11th, 1955.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Dolores, I was born on September the 7th, 1951.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Juanita Luna Navarro, I was born February the 4th 1948.

Ralph Luna: I'm Ralph Luna, born September 3rd, 1931.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Teresa Luna Medrano January 14th, 1945.

Leann Castillo: Okay, can you tell us where you were born?

Norma Luna Rydl: Norma, I was born in Edinburg Texas.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I was born at Grande View Hospital in Edinburg Texas.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Juanita Luna Navarro, I was born with a midwife in Edinburg, Texas.

Ralph Luna: Ralph Luna, I was born in Los Ebanos, Texas, by a midwife.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Teresa Luna Medrano born by a midwife in Edinburg Texas.

Leann Castillo: Okay, can we have your parents' names? Your parents' names for us please.

Norma Luna Rydl: Norma Luna Rydl, my father is Ralph Luna and my mother is Eloisa Medrano Luna.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I am Dolores, my father was Refugio Luna [Sr.] and my mother was Maria G. Luna.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: [My father was] Refugio Luna Sr. and Maria G. Luna.

Ralph Luna: Ralph Luna, my dad [was] Refugio Luna Sr. and my mother was Maria G. Luna

Teresa Luna Medrano: Teresa Luna Medrano, my dad was Refugio Luna Sr. and my mother [was] Maria Garza Luna.

Leann Castillo: Okay, I was wondering if we could go ahead and start with questions about your parents, specifically if you know where they were born or when they were born.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Okay, Refugio Luna was born in Chamàcuaro, Guanajuato, Mexico, and my mother Maria Garza was born [in] Reynosa Tamaulipas, Mexico.

Leann Castillo: Do you know what year they were born?

Teresa Luna Medrano: My dad Refugio was born on March the 13th, 1911 and my mother Maria Garza was born April the 9th, 1912.

Leann Castillo: [whispers] Do you want to ask your questions?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Where did Antonio grow up?

Leann Castillo: What do you mean?

Norma Rydl: The grandfather? Or Great Grandfather?

Leann Castillo: Would you mind if we start with your great grandparents?

Norma Luna Rydl: Well, he was the grandfather [to my father Ralph]. He's the great grandfather to me.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh, ok

Leann Castillo: Oh, ok

Teresa Luna Medrano: Antonio Luna Sr. is our grandfather and he was born in Acàmbaro, Guanajuato, Mexico and to our knowledge our grandmother Dolores Perez Luna was also born in Acàmbaro, Guanajuato.

Ralph Luna: Acambaro, Guanajuato Mexico.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Acambaro, Guanajuato, Mexico.

Ralph Luna: Yes.

Teresa Luna Medrano: It's Acàmbaro?

Teresa Luna Medrano: They're different?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes.

Teresa Luna Medrano: [Everyone laughs] Acambaro, [laughs] Acambaro it is.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Oh, then that's where Grandpa Antonio was born and then she was [also] born in [Acambaro, Guanajuato, Mexico].

Leann Castillo: Oh okay.

Teresa Luna Medrano: They sound the same though.

Leann Castillo: They do [laughs].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And it wasn't Aguas Calientes?

Teresa Luna Medrano: No, that's [in] another state.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No, that [where they] were born, I was just asking.

Ralph: Well, do you wanna know any more about the grandparents?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yes.

Teresa Luna Medrano: [What do you want to] ask?

Ralph Luna: Ok.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: How did they meet?

Ralph: My grandmother, [Dolores's] mother died when she was a baby, her dad gave her to a brother that didn't have family, and she was raised by the uncle. Dolores Perez Luna married my grandfather [Antonio] he had no education, my grandmother [was] a teacher in Mexico.

Norma Luna Rydl: That's where we get the education.

[Everyone laughs].

Ralph Luna: [The grandparents] married. [Later we] found out [my great grandfather had] seven brothers, so we don't know [which one] exactly raised her.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh Okay.

Ralph Luna: One of [her] seven [uncles] didn't have children. [He] raised her, and she [later] became a teacher. My grandfather didn't have [any] education, she thought she was gonna teach [laughs] but she never could.

[Everyone laughs]

Leann Castillo: Okay.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh.

Ralph Luna: And that's about it.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: But, how did they meet?

Ralph Luna: They were born in the 1800s, in the late 1800s.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: How did they meet? You don't know?

Ralph Luna: I don't know.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay.

Ralph Luna: That's all I know as far as them.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Okay well then, they weren't family friends then?

Ralph Luna: Hmm?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: They weren't family friends?

Ralph Luna: No, they just met, it was a [small] town and. they [met]. Her father married somebody else and she had other half-sisters and brothers, but we never found out who they were.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh, okay and did either Antonio or Dolores have a background in farming before they moved to Edinburg?

Ralph: What was that?

Norma Luna Rydl: Did they have a background in farming. Before?

Ralph Luna: No, they just [lived in] the [town]. My grandfather, I know he would butcher calves and [also] sell the[m], because they didn't have no refrigerators, [only wood] stoves at that time. He would kill, slaughter animals and he would sell them by the pound, that's [how] he did his business. They came to the United States with seven children to Los Ebanos, Texas and they stayed here for, oh, I say it was until 19..19 late 20s and then they [only] went back to Mexico with two married sons which was my dad and my uncle [Efren], but they only lasted 8 months in Mexico because my dad could not get used to the life over there, he had been here in the United States. So he was the first one to come back to [Hidalgo, Tx]. My grandparents on my mother's side, were already here in Hidalgo, Tx, so my mother and my dad came over, then later on [my grandparents family came]. Before you knew it, they all came back, some came to Edinburg, others stayed in Hidalgo and then in 1935, [Dad] came here to Edinburg in 1935.

Leann Castillo: Okay.

Leann Castillo: Do you know why your grandparents left Mexico in the first place?

Ralph Luna: Yes, I know in [the] 1900s there [was] a big [epidemic].

Leann Castillo: Oh, a plague?

Ralph Luna: A plague, and [the grandparents] lost three children.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It was the influenza.

Ralph Luna: One was twelve, two boys and a girl, they lost [three] and they almost lost my dad. Some got sick and died, you know they would just carry them, just put them in a bag and put them in a trailer, [then] would take them and just dump them. That's what I know [on why they] came over here. My dad was five or six years old when he came to Los Ebanos and they stayed there until my dad got married. [He] worked on a ranch in Sullivan City [phone rings in background] until the 1930s and he got married in 1930 and then I was born [in 1931], my brother [Romulo] was born [in Los Ebanos]. They left for Mexico in 1933 and they came back in 1934.

Leann castillo: Oh okay.

Ralph Luna: So [we lasted] just eight months, my dad didn't like [it]...he was already used to American...[life].

Ralph Luna: "Life," [that's] what you call it, he decided [to stay]. [Mother] was born in Reynosa but, she, with my grandfather came across and they would write their name at the bridge at that time there was no immigration or anything, they would just write your name and they would let you come. My grandfather would come work, he was the one in charge of the water pump that carried all the water to McAllen, Mission, and Edinburg; he would take care of the pump all day and that was his work. So, my dad came and they were welcomed and he stayed here for about a year in Hidalgo and by that time his parents moved to Edinburg and they all lived where Freddy Gonzalez [School is located].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh okay...

Ralph Luna: And that's where they started working as farmers.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay.

Ralph Luna: My dad [was] the first one [to start farming] and then my uncles started farming ...with mules it wasn't tractors. In 1942 dad bought the first tractor and he had to make an application, and that was during World War II, so he could buy a tractor. [There weren't many]...tractors were very scarce. Mr. Atwood was the one in charge, so dad got to know him, and he put his name [on the application]. At that time, he got called to the army in 1942 and then when he was over there in San Antonio, [they asked], "How many children do you have?" he said four, four children. That was me [(Ralph)], my brother Lito, and Cuco, and Ramon and he told them he had four sons and they asked him, "What do you do?" He said, "Well, I'm a farmer" and they said, "Listen here, we are going to send you back because we need farmers, you will be doing better to our country farming than going to war," so they sent him back, he got spared, but he got sent back and from then on he started farming. He bought a tractor and started [growing] bigger and bigger, he bought land where we live now and then he started buying land around here.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay [pats Ralph's arm].

Leann Castillo: Cuco is who?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Refugio

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Jr.

Leann Castillo: Okay.

Ralph: Cuco [was his] nickname.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Third [brother].

Leann Castillo: Can we ask what, why you call him Cuco?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Nickname.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Nickname.

Leann Castillo: Just a nickname?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes.

Teresa Luna Medrano: We all have certain nicknames.

Leann Castillo: Can you tell us?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yes, 'cause that's a question.

Leann Castillo: Your nicknames?

Norma Luna Rydl: I have Norma Linda [laughs] that's not.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Norma Linda?

Norma Luna Rydl: It's always been Norma.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I have several, they call me Lola and Loli.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: I have the same thing Juanita, Janie, Juana.

Leann Castillo: Mhmm.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: You know they just usually called us by [our] names. There weren't any, hardly any nicknames. Right, Tere?

Teresa Luna Medrano: No, [mine is] just short for Teresa, its Tere. So that's about it.

Maria Juanita Navarro: They always called us by name.

Ralph Luna: And mine they called me Fel, Rafa, Rafael, or Rafele.

Maria Juanita Navarro: But mama would call you Rafele.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Rafael...she'd always call him-[Rafele].

Ralph Luna: My dad would always call me Fel. My grandmother would call me Fel.

Leann Castillo: Can you tell us?

Ralph Luna: They call it Felos. De Raphael Felos.

Leann Castillo: Can you tell us the order of when you were born, who's the oldest and who's the youngest?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay, Tere you wanna go?

Teresa Luna Medrano: It's Ralph, Rafael, then it's Romulo.

Ralph Luna: Lito.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Add the age, no the year, did you say?

Maria Juanita Navarro: The year?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Just the name and the year? Or what?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: In order.

Leann Castillo: Just the order.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Just the order of the given name, right?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Yes].

Teresa Luna Medrano: Rafael, Romulo, Refugio Jr.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Mhmm [writes down names].

Teres Luna Medrano: Ramon.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ramon.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Roberto, Rodolfo, Teresa, Juanita, Dolores, and Cecilia.

Ralph Luna: (Asked to interviewers) Do you all want nicknames?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And they all have -we all have Maria.

Ralph Luna: No, no they don't.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Tere doesn't have it.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: You don't?

Teresa Luna Medrano: No.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Oh.

[Everyone laughs.]

Teresa Luna Medrano: I'm just Tere.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: The last three.

Ralph Luna: We all call her Tere.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: She wanted to name us after-[her].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It's when -ask her why?

Ralph Luna: Ramon was [Mon].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ask her why?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Oh yes, I was given [clock chimes] just Tere, Teresita de Jesus it was a promise my mom had given because she was going to lose her pregnancy with me so she said that she would name me after that saint if I was spared so that's why I...I'm Teresita de Jesus. That's my name.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No Maria?

Teres Luna Medrano: No Maria.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: But what's your real given name? Teresita?

Teresa Luna Medrano: No...well I have two, I have.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: What's on the birth certificate?

Ralph Luna: I think she promised her that name because she had had six boys and no and she was [the girl they wanted].

[Everyone laughs].

Ralph Luna: And they.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Maybe that's why?

[Everyone laughs].

Ralph Luna: Yeah maybe that's why everybody. . .

Norma Luna Rydl: And Dad, you said that you were called Rafael because [your dad] had a brother that.

Ralph Luna: That died in the [epidemic in Mexico].

Norma Luna Rydl: One of the ones that died was Rafael.

Ralph Luna: And that's why I was called after [him]. I was named after my uncle the first that died in the epidemic, they lost three children, one was twelve and another little girl was eight.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So that's three.

Leann Castillo: Mhmm.

Ralph Luna: There was a big epidemic in Mexico.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: The influenza.

Ralph Luna: They [would] send a wagon to pick up all the dead every day.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay.

Leann Castillo: Do you know how your parents met each other before they got married?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yes, go ahead and tell them the story Janie [laughter from the group]. She's gonna tell you the story.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Well, I didn't know but Cecilia, our baby sister, she spent a little bit more time with my mother, they would talk. I [asked] her today, she couldn't make it today, but she said that my mother would come to Reynosa, to wash clothes in the [Rio Grande] River, I don't know how often she came to the river to wash clothes and she would wash them with a rock, this is how she met my dad. My dad would come in a horse, riding down the river, putting love notes under the rock [where she would wash the clothes].

Leann Castillo and Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Laughs].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Where my mother was washing clothes. They knew about it, so that was [their] secret [meeting] place. He would write love notes there and she would leave love notes there.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Giggles].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: [Yes, they would talk whenever they were both at the location on the Rio Grande River].

Leann Castillo: They never talked?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro and Maria Dolores Luna Vega: They were not allowed.

Ralph Luna: Her father.

Leann Castillo: They were not allowed?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It was a sign of disrespect.

Leann Castillo: Ohhh.

Ralph Luna: Her father would take them to weddings, at that time [they were at] the ranches you know they had to go by wagon because there [were] no towns [around], [all they had were] ranches.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Mhmm.

Ralph Luna: My dad would follow on a horse. My mother would ride, her father would drive her to [a] wedding in a wagon and my dad would follow her in a horse and they would make signs.

[Everyone laughs].

Ralph Luna: And then she would dance with him at the wedding and that was when they would get together.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: That's where they met and then they got married.

Norma Luna Rydl: The gatherings or wedding.

Leann Castillo: So, they only saw each other at the weddings?

Ralph Luna: There were no movies or anything like that, just dances you know where people would get married and it wasn't [an] every day [event], it would be neighbors that would get married and then [there was a celebration].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: They would meet that way and leave their little notes.

Leann Castillo: That's sweet [laughs].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yeah, that it is [laughs].

Leann Castillo: That doesn't happen anymore [laughs].

[Everyone laughs].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No, not in this era it doesn't.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Now it's one of those sport cars [laughs].

[Everyone laughs].

Ralph Luna: My dad said that at that time, if you had a real good horse it's like having a Cadillac.

[Everyone laughs].

Ralph Luna: So, it depends on the kind of horse you had.

Norma Luna Rydl: The horsepower (laughs).

[Everyone laughs].

Ralph Luna: Everybody would look at the beautiful horse.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: They were pretty expensive.

Leann Castillo: They were expensive back then, yes.

Ralph Luna: That was a luxury and nowadays you know cars, a Cadillac or automobile or whatever and if you had a [small horse] that was no good then.

Norma Luna Rydl: [Laughs] Isn't that a mule?
[Laughter among the group].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: How was [their] wedding day, like what did they do?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay, Cecilia again she told me that mom told her that she [rode] in a buggy

Caitlyn Rodriguez: In a buggy?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: To the church. In a buggy, in a horse and carriage.

Ralph Luna: We have a picture.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: August the 1st, 1930 and they married in Rio Grande City.

Leann Castillo: So, they were already on this side?

Ralph Luna: Yes.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yes.

Leann Castillo: Oh okay.

Teresa Luna Medrano: They lived in Hidalgo, but they used to cross.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Back and forth, it was an open bridge, you know?

Ralph Luna: Mother was four months old when she came over and she never went back to Mexico. That's when she would sign their names, to come over, and she stayed here like a permanent resident and my grandfather had his name too, so he stayed here permanently, but then they moved to Los Ebanos to work in a ranch and that's where they met and then they got married over there and they were both, my dad and my mother were raised here in the Rio Grande Valley, but they didn't go to Mexico until my brother and I were born in 1933.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Mhmm.

Ralph Luna: They came back [from Mexico], it was only eight months and then they came back [to the US]. So, they were only gone for eight months.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Why did they go to Mexico? Why did they go back to Mexico?

Ralph Luna: My grandfather insisted that he wanted the family to. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: To follow the family –

Ralph Luna: He wanted [the family together] over here because of the epidemic.

Ralph Luna: The epidemic and after they all ([the family]) got raised here [and] born here. The last one was about four or five years old, [when] they decided to go back to Mexico and they all had it really good here in the United States. They had a pickup, they had three pickups and beds and everything and they went over there thinking that they were going to make a better life but then my dad couldn't get along with people over there because he wanted to farm, and they wouldn't let him because they have that Ejido and they wanted him to join that union.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It was a farming group.

Ralph Luna: They wanted him to join that [group] and Dad decided to sell the farm and came back.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Came back.

Leann Castillo: Oh okay.

Ralph Luna: He said he was not [going to] join, but he was already [to come to the US].

Norma Luna Rydl: What was the name of the group?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It's the Mexico Farming Group.

Ralph Luna: Ejidos.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ejidos, that's what they called them.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: How is that spelled? Ejido?

Ralph Luna: Ejido, so it's a group that you have to [join].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: How do you spell it?

[Everyone laughs].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Ejido.

Norma Luna Rydl: Google it [laughs].

[Everyone laughs]

Ralph Luna: Ejido.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Eh

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Eh?

Maria Juniata Luna Navarro: Hido.

Ralph Luna: Hido.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Okay. I think it's E.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Ejido?

Ralph Luna: It's a group of farming.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Farming [union].

Leann Castillo: So, it's like a-

Norma Luna Rydl: They still farm in a union.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It's a union.

Ralph Luna: It's a union.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: They give them a little portion, but they have to.

Ralph Luna: They have it where families get together.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: The government gives you so much land, a portion.

Leann Castillo: Oh okay.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: They didn't like that; Dad didn't like that.

Ralph Luna: He didn't like it at all.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: So, they came back.

Ralph Luna: Because, he [had] already been here in Los Ebanos in Sullivan City, they got their land and they started farming. They raised a lot of goats and they sold all that to go to Mexico because of our grandfather but then my dad didn't like it so, he was the first one to come back and the other ([family members]) came right back after. After that they all came back, and they settled here in Edinburg.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Ejido...

Ralph Luna: And then from there on -and all the other ([family members]) came back.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Everyone came back?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Ejido, I don't know if it has.

Teresa Luna Medrano: It should be in the dictionary, if you want it in.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Spanish, a Spanish dictionary.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh okay.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Ejido.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: E-J-I-D-O

Ralph Luna: It's a government.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: E-J-I-D-O

Ralph Luna: You know, in 1930, the United States gave a lot of people from Kansas portions of land from here in the valley and we had a lot of people who received 80 acres. My dad didn't have that opportunity to get land given to them, but the United States gave to people that came from Europe or Germany and then they would bring them [to settle in the United States].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I spelled it right... Ejido

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ah, si, she did

Ralph Luna: A little bit of money, like when [they] lived [in Europe], I met people that [fought] during World War II.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: World War II.

Norma Luna Rydl: Oh, okay.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay. We got it, well she got it (points to Dolores).

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It's a piece of land, farmed communally under a system supported by the state.

Teresa Luna Medrano: How do you spell it?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: E-H-I-D-O

Leann Castillo: E-J-I-D-O.

Ralph Luna: So, we had it right?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: E-J-I-D-O, the spelling is tricky.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yeah [laughs] it is.

Ralph Luna: Have you heard the word before?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: No.

Leann Castillo: No.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: I've never heard of it.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Was their wedding very traditional? Or did their wedding date have a specific meaning? Or was it just a random date that they set?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It was a random, I would say it was a random date.

Teresa Luna Medrano: It was just a family [affair] and gathering [of close friends].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Food.

Teresa Luna Medrano: 'Cause according to how we see the picture.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: They danced out in the dirt patio [floor].

Ralph Luna: [They] had a very good wedding 'cause Mother got a.....

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: . . .wedding dress.

Norma Luna Rydl: Well back then it was traditional. The tradition of the wedding.

Leann Castillo: Do you happen to have a.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: A picture? Yeah [goes to get copy].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: We did have the wedding picture?

Teresa Luna Medrano: You didn't copy it?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No because Mar[e] was supposed to give it to me.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Oh, okay.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: She's [going to] make a copy [of the photo with] a frame.

Leann Castillo: Oh, okay.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Because we want the antique frame [included].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh, okay.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: She sealed it (the photo).

Leann Castillo: Oh.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: We got the picture but Mari's [going to bring the photo] with [the] frame.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Ah, she is?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Mhmm.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Oh, okay.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Did she keep the wedding dress or the bouquet?

Norma Luna Rydl: Did anybody keep the wedding dress or the bouquet? Or?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Her veil?

[Everyone laughs].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It deteriorated.

Norma Luna Rydl: Aww.

Leann Castillo: It deteriorated?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yeah.

Norma Luna Rydl: Well, probably at the time they didn't [know] how [to] preserve [the dress].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: To preserve (save the dress).

Ralph Luna: Well it was traditional they had a dance and they had the meal.

Norma Luna Rydl: No [Dad], she's saying that if any of them [kept] the dress? (Maria Juanita [Luna] Navarro brings out the wedding photo).

Caitlyn Rodriguez: That's how my grandparents were, also.

Teresa Luna Medrano: [Dad's] sitting down, "I'm the boss" [laughs].

(Everyone laughs).

Ralph Luna: There would've been the first one to [wear] it but she didn't (laughs).

Leann Castillo: Can I take a picture of it? Until we can get a copy.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: I wanted – I want to get you a copy with a frame.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Antique frame.

Leann Castillo: Okay.

Ralph Luna: [Laughing] Did you notice how my dad is sitting [down].

Ralph Luna: Yeah, he's (Dad) sitting down and (Mom) she's standing up [laughs].

[Everyone laughs].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Okay.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Let's see...Who else?

Ralph Luna: That's a nice picture.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: What else should I ask? (Addresses Leann Castillo) 'Cause the rest is about them individually.

Leann Castillo: I guess we can move on to the individual.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh okay. Or should I ask this one last question? About Antonio and Dolores?

Leann Castillo: Yeah.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Okay. So, the last question I had written up for Antonio and Dolores was, did they ever have doubts leaving Mexico? Or were they glad that they came over?

Ralph Luna: What was that?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Was, Grandpa, Grandfather Antonio and Mama Lolita, did they have any regrets coming back to the United States?

Ralph Luna: No, because they were happy to come [back to the U.S.]. Dad [was] the first one to [come] over. The other [family members] were raised here. They had family here. [His] other brother that was married, had four children, some were going to school. As soon as my dad came over, after a few months they started coming in because they all-[followed my dad].

Teresa Luna Medrano: Because you know they all looked up to my dad, he was really that leader to depend on.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: The leader of the pack [laughs].

Ralph Luna: He was the leader because he's the one that gave them advice.

Teresa Luna Medrano: They would always look for him.

Ralph Luna: Then when they (uncles) saw him come over to the U.S. and [saw] he was doing [well] because he found work right away.

Leann Castillo: That- that's your dad, right?

Ralph Luna: Yes, and he started from the bottom working with hoes, picking fruit, and he bought his first [tractor] in 1942 tractor and then he [bough]t a truck and that was during World War II. The government needed all the food for the soldiers [so they needed farmers]. And then he was getting very, very good prices so, that's when he moved up.

Norma Luna Rydl: Now did they get married in the morning? Did you get married at night? Or was it all day?

Ralph Luna: All day event.

Normal Luna Rydl: All day?

Ralph Luna: All day, all night.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Laughs] All day?

Norma Luna Rydl: [Laughs] All day festivities.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: With food?

Ralph Luna: Yes.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Oh wow.

Norma Luna Rydl: Now that's what I wanted to know, the questions that they were asking that the "tradition..." [inaudible].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Now let's see...

Ralph Luna: What was that now?

Norma Luna Rydl: No that they say that the tradition that they had the wedding all day long

Ralph Luna: They married in the morning and then they had a big meal at noon and then at night they had another, for the ones that would come [later].

Norma Luna Rydl: A reception thing.

Leann Castillo: That was your parents?

Ralph Luna: Have you ever been to a Mexican wedding?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Was there any music?

Ralph Luna: Yes, music all day, music all night.

Norma Luna Rydl: I know that's there's the, after they get married what is it [after all the guests left], they had the menudo?

Ralph Luna: Well this [time] they didn't have menudo they had cabrito, because they raised them, and they were well off. When they got married, they were well off here and they sold everything because the grandfather wanted to have them there, over there. So, they sold everything, completely and dad said that I didn't like it over there. That I didn't want to sleep there because I wanted my room

Norma Luna Rydl: Oh, so you were the rebellious one?

Ralph Luna: And I would get up and I wouldn't want to go to bed [laughs] because I wanted my bed Mother said.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And how old were you then?

Ralph Luna: Two years.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Two years. . . [laughter].

Ralph Luna: And Lito was about a year and I was two and a half.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: You all probably felt probably the change.

Ralph Luna: Yes, and Dad said that I would go out and I would get candy from the people that were selling candy and get [the candy], you know get [the candy] and run [laughter].

Ralph Luna: And he would pay them, and they would say “your son took the candy” but he told them that if I wanted some candy to give it to me but then I didn’t ask for it I would just grab it, but I was only two and a half. And then I remember when we were back in Hidalgo, I was three and a half and I remember when we were here me and my brother, then my other brother. Cuco was born in 1935.

Norma Luna Rydl: Going back to the wedding, so you had both grandparents, your grandparents were there?

Ralph Luna: Yes, because my dad asked for permission to marry my mother and they go and ask for [her hand in] marriage.

Leann Castillo: For permission.

Ralph Luna: And then they. . .

Norma Luna Rydl: They give their hand [for marriage].

Ralph Luna: Both parents decided when to get married.

Leann Castillo and Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ohhh.

Ralph Luna: And they got married August the 1st, 1930.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh okay.

Ralph Luna: And then the day they got married, they had a whole day [of celebration].

Ralph Luna: All the neighbors around [in Los Ebanos] had farms, a lot of them well-[off] people. Diaz [family] had a big ranch. They had big ranches. Garza’s they had hundred, thousands of acres they would go to those weddings, but it wasn’t every day, people that knew each other. Family or friends.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So, then it was just traditional for the parents to go ask for the hand of the daughter.

Leann Castillo: They had to go with their children to go ask.

Ralph Luna: They said, they had people [go with you to ask for her hand].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Whaat?? That's what my dad did.

Ralph Luna: You know, if you were [going to] get married you gotta get, [your fiance's] parent[s] would bring some people to ask for your hand. [Laughs] And sometimes they don't give you [permission].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: They'll say no.

Ralph Luna: They say no.

Leann Castillo: And then just no?

Ralph Luna: And then she elopes.

Leann Castillo: Oh [everyone laughs].

Teresa Luna Medrano: Second step [laughter continues].

Norma Luna Rydl: [Laughs] And then they elope?

Ralph Luna: Well they'd go and ask for you hand and if your parents don't [want to] give you [away], then (the groom) boyfriend and the girlfriend, they decide well if [they] won't let us get married 'bye, bye, bye'- our way, then we gonna elope.

Norma Luna Rydl: But yours were traditional? They had the wedding?

Ralph Luna: Sometimes if you didn't [get permission to get married], the boyfriend would get [upset and cut her hair].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Gasps].

Leann Castillo: What?

Ralph Luna: He would cut [her] hair in revenge.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Laughs].

Norma Luna Rydl: Oh, Grandmother had long hair.

Ralph Luna: If you back up that your parents didn't let you marry right?

Leann Castillo: Mhmm.

Ralph Luna: He would go to all the work to get permission to get married and your parents decide no, but then later on, if you don't elope, then the boyfriend would get furious and then you try to do something [else].

Norma Luna Rydl: Okay [laughs].

[Laughter from everyone].

Ralph Luna: I would remember, the parents didn't let her get married and the boyfriend chasing the girl and was going to cut all her hair.

Leann Castillo: Oh [laughs].

Ralph Luna: You see at that time, everybody lived next door where the water was, and the boyfriend would watch her to see when she would get a bucket of water and when she would be by herself and he would get even.

Norma Luna Rydl: Okay, what other questions do you have?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: I guess we can move down to. . .

Leann Castillo: Focus on your family, on you all.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: 'Cause I have them all kind of mixed up... I guess we can start with. . .

Leann Castillo: Oh.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Where and how?

Leann Castillo: We can go with, when you were baptized or where you were baptized?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Oh, we'd have to go back and look at our birth certificates.

Ralph Luna: Oh yes within two-two-[months].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Where? Where? Where?

Ralph Luna: The church in Edinburg.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Sacred heart?

Ralph Luna: I was baptized in Los Ebanos, all of you were in Edinburg.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Sacred Heart [Catholic Church].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We don't know the dates; we'd have to look them up.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Okay.

Leann Castillo: That's okay.

Ralph Luna: But that was done when they were two months old.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: That was close to the year you were born.

Ralph Luna: Now it takes a little bit longer [laughs].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh, okay. If you don't mind me asking, what religion are you?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Catholics.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And do you attend church often?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yes, weekly.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Whenever possible.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And you've gone through each step of baptism? Confirmation?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: My mother made it a point that was a big part of us growing up. That we had to go to CCD [and do] all our sacraments.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Even in getting married, she wanted us to get married the right way.

Leann Castillo: Mhmm.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Even though, some eloped (motions to Aunt Janie) and eventually they got married.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: (Jokingly) I wonder who it is?

[Everyone laughs].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Let me see ... oh okay how I do ... I don't know how to ask it, so you mentioned that some of you were delivered by midwives?

Ralph Luna: Yes, I was.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Or were all of you?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Eight of us.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Eight of you?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Right.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I was the only one born in a hospital and my younger sister Cecilia, in a clinic.

Leann Castillo and Caitlyn Rodriguez: Cecilia.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: She was born in a clinic.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So, you happen to know by chance what clinic?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: What clinic?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yes, what clinic?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I think it was in McAllen [Clinic].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: McAllen [Clinic].

Ralph Luna: McAllen [Clinic].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And what hospital were you born?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Edinburg (Grandview), the one they tore down here.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Grandview?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Grandview.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Regional...Grandview, Grandview. Okay.

Leann Castillo: The midwife, do you know who the midwife was? Do you know how your parents met the midwife?

Ralph Luna: She was very popular in Edinburg, Nativida, all I know is Nativida. And I remember mother sending me from school to go to her house to get the birth certificate. I knew where she lived, and she would tell me go get me the certificate and I would go, and the lady would already. . .

Norma Luna Rydl: Have it ready for you.

Ralph Luna: Because Dad would pay her to deliver, but it would take about a month or so for her to- [process the certificate].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Register

Ralph Luna: Register in the courthouse. Here in Edinburg. But I didn't do that in mine because I was born in Los Ebanos

Teresa Luna Medrano: So, do you remember how much they charged the deliveries?

Ralph Luna: I think it was about \$10.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Wow [Laughs].

Norma Luna Rydl: Well \$10 dollars was a lot back then.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It was a lot back then, girls.

Ralph Luna: Hamburgers were about a nickel then?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah.

Ralph Luna: And that was before, a long time ago, before that a shirt was 25 cents and in the 1950s, I was working for 50 cents an hour.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Okay... and at what age were you all allowed to date?

[Everyone laughs]

Teresa Luna Medrano: There was dating back then, or you would go to parties or school functions, or to weddings.

Ralph Luna: Your parents had no idea who you were dating or anything.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega Yea and my mom always would go with us.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Like for weddings.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: She'd stay in the car or go inside to [talk].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We were not allowed.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: At the prom or whatever.

Norma Luna Rydl: Even in my era (points to Ralph) he took me [and that was in the 1970s].

Teresa Luna Medrano: [Yes] there was a lot of dating back then, but we were still in that stage.

Ralph Luna: The only time I let my daughter go the first time by herself was [the] junior [senior] prom she went, and she had a partner [double date] and I let her go.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yea but they are asking about us.

[Everyone laughs].

Norma Luna Rydl: They still take you.

Ralph Luna: We didn't bring girlfriends to our house, [no one].....

Teresa Luna Medrano: You know we didn't bring others.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: [To] socialize.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Socialize or stay over. If people stayed over with us, it would be your cousins or your other siblings.

Ralph Luna: My dad if I were to bring friends, he'd say don't bring them [any] more because [he] didn't want for her to meet my friends.

Leann Castillo and Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ohhh [both laugh].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Girls weren't allowed to [stay overnight] because you see they were outsiders; they were looking out for us.

Norma Luna Rydl: And there were six brothers

Leann Castillo: Did you like having six older brothers?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It was challenging

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Well it was, we were the last of the ten, we were ten, and we were the last four of the ten.

Ralph Luna: They were [four] girls.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: [Six older brothers] grown up, some of them were married.

Ralph Luna: [Mom and Dad] were very good parents, very good but they were strict. Until the day I was going to get married, I told my parents that I wanted to get married and then my dad [had a group] ask my wife's parents, if we could get married, that's the only time they [met] my wife.

Norma Luna Rydl: We learned the word respect.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Whatever the parents say.

Norma Luna Rydl: Yeah.

Ralph Luna: At that [time], [some of] the Anglos, the girls, could date and go to dances. The boys would pick them up in their cars, but then we weren't allowed.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It wasn't part of our culture. The way we were raised, the freedom.

Ralph Luna: Now a days, I let my daughters as soon as they went to college. I let them date, you know, go out. All I wanted to know is when they were coming back and who they were going out with, but then I gave them permission to go out.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We never went to games, football games, right Tere?

Teresa Luna Medrano: No.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: They never took us out to games...very rarely.

Teresa Luna Medrano: We lived on a farm and back then to go three or four miles, would take more like thirty minutes because it was all [caliche roads].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Dirt ... caliche.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Caliche and dirt roads and so we really didn't go. We went to the groceries; it was once a [month and mass on Sundays].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Once a month.

Teresa Luna Medrano: [Yes].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Mother would order food in majority like the –

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Bulks.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Bulks.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Like the sacks of flour.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Sacks of beans.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Beans.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Sacks of rice.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Sugar.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Sugar. She never knew much about grocery stores until we were a little older.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Till I started to drive. We had drivers ed. in school, so I was able to get it in there [laughs].

Leann Castillo: How old were you?

Teresa Luna Medrano: I was...about sixteen, seventeen when I [took the class].

Ralph Luna: In school, we all got our drivers licenses in school.

Leann Castillo: Mhmm.

Teresa Luna Medrano: So...once I started driving then I could drive my mom, because my brothers all were farmers, they were always. . .

Maria Juniata Luna Navarro: Working.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Working.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Always working and so my dad [also] checking up on everything so, once I got to drive, then we went to the groceries [laughs], big deal, big time [laughs].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Tell them about the jeep...

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah, well when there [was] no vehicles, we [had] a jeep.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: An open jeep.

Teresa Luna Medrano: A stick shift, yeah and we'd get in there and we'd go visit our friends around. My mom and all of us girls would all go.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We'd load up that jeep [laughs].

[Everyone laughs].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It was fun, fun, all the way [laughs].

Teresa Luna Medrano: It was fun, but we hardly ever [went out].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: But they never let us go by ourselves.

Teresa Luna Medrano: We always had our mom with us.

Ralph Luna: Well, you know it's changed completely.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Different era.

Ralph Luna: Now they get married, they just have to tell you "we're getting married", that's it. I didn't have to go and ask for the hand, they said, "we're getting married" and I said "okay" [laughs].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So, your perspective on marriage and dating changed on how the generation are nowadays? Or you made your kids do the same thing?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: No, just let them.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Ours has changed; they always tell us that [we are] old school [ideas].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We're still old school.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Generations now are too liberal.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yeah.

Teresa Luna Medrano: They lost the aspect of. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Respect.

Teresa Luna Medrano: They already know what's coming, you know because of our technology and everything, which is great, but [we are] losing a lot of our old [traditions].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: The values.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Values and the good times you have, you know, of knowing less than what we know now.

Ralph Luna: Nowadays, couples are living together, by high school they're together and they are living with their parent's you know, [they're] raising them-

Norma Luna Rydl: Well that's what the change is

Ralph Luna: Nowadays they're not married.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: But when we were growing up, we were not scared of anything, our doors were unlocked. We wandered around [with no fear of outsiders coming inside your house].

Teresa Luna Medrano: No air con.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No air con.

Norma Luna Rydl: The windows were open, 'cause it was hot.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No telephone [laughs].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Black and white TVs, you know.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Outhouses. We had outhouses.

Leann Castillo: Do you know when you had your first telephone or TV?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: That was when, the [newer] house, which was in 1961.

Ralph Luna: I'm the one that put a phone.

(Luna sisters): No

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We had it in the old house, but Dad disconnected it.

Ralph Luna: I had a telephone and then Dad [had] me get a telephone [for him]. But somehow, I don't know why he took it out, I guess a lot of guys were calling them [laughs].

[Everyone laughs].

Norma Luna Rydl: No one's [going to] say.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Not me I was too young.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: What year was it?

Ralph Luna: Huh?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: What year was it?

Ralph Luna: 1950.... Five.

Teresa Luna Medrano: About '58.

Ralph Luna: '55.

Teresa Luna Medrano: '55.

Ralph Luna: Because when I was in the army, wanted to call my parents and I had to call my neighbor. My neighbors to go and get them and stuff.

Norma Luna Rydl: To talk to them.

Ralph Luna: Talk to them. One or two times, but then when I came home, and I got married I put a telephone myself and they would go and use my phone, but I had one for Mother, but I don't know why Dad took it [out]. Maybe you knew?

Teresa Luna Medrano: I don't know, I didn't pay too much attention.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We weren't used to it.

Teresa Luna Medrano: A lot of people didn't have phones back then, you know.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It was party lines.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: “Hang up [we are] on the line!”

Teresa Luna Medrano: Listening on the line.

Leann Castillo: Ohhh [laughs].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: There were two or three people on the same line.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Well if, if it was your phone, it rang once and it would stop and then it [would] ring again; if it was the neighbors, it rang twice and then stop and it rang twice; and the third party would be ringing [three times] and ~~you know but~~ that’s how you could tell when it was your phone.

Ralph Luna: And sometimes you were talking, and you could hear the other.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Oh, someone listening, eavesdropping.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ohhh.

Leann Castillo: Ewww.

Ralph Luna: Yeah.

Teresa Luna Medrano: So, everybody knew what was going on.

Ralph Luna: They discussed about [things you didn’t need to know].

Norma Luna Rydl: That was social media back then.

Teresa Luna Medrano: And you would tell somebody, “Get off the line [laughs]!”

[Everyone laughs].

Teresa Luna Medrano: Because you’d hear [them] in the background.

Leann Castillo: Can we ask you when you all got married? And how you met your significant other? If that’s okay?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yeah. Ralph do you want to go first?

Ralph Luna: What?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: When did you get married?

Ralph Luna: I got married November the 27th, 1954. I was [going to] get married two years before but I got the call [from] the army so all the wedding plans stopped [and] I went to the army.

Leann Castillo: How old were you?

Ralph Luna: I was 21 and then I cancelled everything, went to training, and I went to Korea. Was over there fighting.

Norma Luna Rydl: But when you got married, you were 21 or 20?

Ralph Luna: 23.

Norma Luna Rydl: 23, there you go.

Ralph Luna: 21 was when I was [going to] get married.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: But then he cancelled to go [to the Army]. Two years [later he married].

Ralph Luna: ‘Cause I didn’t know if I was [going to] get killed if we would marry she had to stay here because I would be gone. I decided that it was best and I’m glad that I did, a lot of my friends that were with me in the army they cried a lot because they missed their families at night, guys, when, it was you know, how you call it, miss their wives and some would get their “Dear John” and they would go berserk. Because their wives would find somebody else and they would send, “I’m sorry”. You know and there was a song about that “Dear John”. You know that they were happy and suddenly they would get a letter, “I’m sorry but I don’t want you anymore.” They would go crazy, and sometimes they had to put them [in] an asylum, you know where they would. . .

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Psych ward (laughs).

[Everyone laughs].

Norma Luna Rydl: Time out.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Tere.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Me? I met my husband Fidel at a wedding, we went to dances. I got married March 18th, 1966.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And how old were you?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Gosh! I think I was 21.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: 21?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Mhmm.

Ralph Luna: Oh! I didn’t tell you I met my wife in school.

Leann Castillo: Oh okay.

Ralph Luna: At the bus [stop], my bus would get in, [then] hers and then I would see her coming down, finally I had the courage to ask her “Would you wanna be my sweetheart?”

Teresa Luna Medrano: Okay... Janie?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Well, I eloped, [then] I got married February the 3rd, 1967 and I was 17 and I met my husband Mario at school for 3 months.

Leann Castillo: Wait, you got married after 3 months?

Ralph Luna: Sure.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yeah, I met him in September when we started school, I was a senior and we got married in February.

[Everyone laughs].

Norma Luna Rydl: And they have been together?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: 51 years

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And why did you elope?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: They wouldn't let us date [laughs].

[Everyone laughs].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So just marry [laughs].

Ralph Luna: She was a senior.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: I was a senior, I had to go back to school, talk to the board because my brother Romulo convinced me to go back, since I was just missing three or four months [to] graduate. So, I went back to school and I graduated and that's as far as I got.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Do we say our name now?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Mhmm.

Leann Castillo: Yes.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Dolores, I met my husband at an Inn Keeper [Band] dance in the Armory in Edinburg, Texas and that was on December 13th, 1968 and soon, well we sort of knew each other on and off and going to the prom and stuff and we got married on May 18th, 1973.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And how old were you?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I was 21.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: 21? And your husband's name was?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Eduardo [Vega] Sr.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Eduardo [Vega] Sr.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: He's a senior because I have a [son that's a] junior. And we have been married 45 years.

Leann Castillo: Did you -were you kind of ready to be married at age 21 or 17 or 23?

Teresa Luna Medrano: I think we were because back then you had a more mature aspect and you know you sort of had it in your mind that you went to school and maybe after graduation you know you got married or you go to college and I think we were more mature because nowadays it's easier. Us as parents tend to give more, our kids of what we didn't have so now it's easier for the new generation until they go on their own, then they come back to your parents "we need this" or "we need that." But back then you married, you're on your own, you had to really struggle to make ends meet so, I think that we had our generation as more self, self-maintained that you had to do for yourself. Our kids' generation, they do for themselves, but they always know that they have a backup with their parents, you know. So, I think we were mature enough.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Our kids, we strived to get them through college, to go to college while back then when we were growing up, some of us made it to college and some of us didn't want to go to college.

Teresa Luna Medrano: But you know what? In our generation back then you graduated at 8th grade so a lot of our peers or fellow students they graduated at 8th grade. They were not [ready] to go back to school because they would go and labor and other things like that. But then it got, as generations when through, 8th grade wasn't enough, you know. You had to stay and graduate the 12th grade and then by the time I got to 12th grade, well it was okay 'cause you had your diploma but then they started going to college and right now you are going to college and now they want you with a masters [laughs].

Ralph Luna: Teachers would tell us "finish high school" [or] "go to college". If you would finish high school that your kids would finish college, so they would tell us to at least finish high school and then our children had a chance to go get better.

Norma Luna Rydl and Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Get a higher education.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Do you [want to] take a break? Some chicken sandwiches?

(15 minutes later. . .)

Leann Castillo: Your grandfather Antonio Luna Sr., he was born?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: He was born January 17th, 1882 and he passed away March 28th, 1971. Dolores my grandmother was born October 25th, 1886 and she passed away January 28th, 1948. We knew when they passed but we didn't know where they were born.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Where did they pass away?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Here, in Edinburg.

Ralph Luna: They're both buried at Edinburg.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Hillcrest [cemetery].

Leann Castillo: Oh, okay I know where that's at, I worked on a project at the Hidalgo public cemetery.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Oh, okay.

Ralph Luna: Well at least I know, I didn't know about that, I knew they were born in the 1800s.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And we told them when they were born right?

Norma Luna Rydl: [Yes].

Teresa Luna Medrano: Refugio died May 6th, 1965 and my mom on died on January the 12th, 1993.

Leann Castillo: Did they pass of old age?

Teresa Luna Medrano: My dad died of a car crash.

Leann Castillo: Oh, I'm sorry.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Mom was, I think she had a heart attack

Ralph Luna: But she was 80.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Papa Toño (Antonio), he was old age, he was 92.

Ralph Luna: And my grandmother she died [at age 62].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: [Grandma] Dolores died of diabetes.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Diabetes.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Diabetes.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And she was how old?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Well, [62] years ago.

Teresa Luna Medrano: No, how old was she when she died?

Ralph Luna: She was my age [62].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Do the math.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: 52?

Ralph Luna: She died January the 28th.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: She's 48 and 14? Add 48 and 14.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: 62?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yeah.

Ralph Luna: That's what I told you, 62. I was right.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It was 70 years ago [she died], because she was born in 1886. She died in January 28th.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Could we give you our mom's dad's name?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Sure.

Teresa Luna Medrano: His name was Inocente Garza and her mom's name was San Juanita Zepeda.

Ralph Luna: Zepeda with a Z.

Teresa Luna Medrano: And that's my mom's parents.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Maria G. Luna's parents.

[Clock bell chimes]

Norma Luna Rydl: Aunt Janie, do you let that go on at night?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yes.

Norma Luna Rydl: [Gasps] I could not have that in my house.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: You get used to it.

[Everyone laughs].

Norma Luna Rydl: I'm a light sleeper, I'll hear it.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: I keep thinking it's a doorbell [laughs].

[Everyone laughs].

Teresa Luna Medrano: [Jokes] Goes to the door "come in!"

[Everyone laughs].

Interviewees: Maria Juanita Luna Navarro, Maria Dolores Luna Vega, Norma Luna Rydl, Teresa Luna Medrano, Dora Luna, Ramon Luna

Interviewers: Leann Castillo, Caitlyn Rodriguez

At Maria Juanita Luna Navarro's home – Tuesday, October 16, 2018

The women of the Luna family largely contributed in this interview, discussing all the family members of the Luna family and their children and grandchildren. In this interview, the topics were focused on the family tree, leniency in the education environment, and the ambiance of everyday life back when they were children.

Leann Castillo: Ok, we are recording. This is Leann Castillo. And...

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And Caitlyn Rodriguez

Leann Castillo: It is...What time is it? It is 3:26 pm on 10/16/2018. And we are here at Janie Navarro's house and we are doing our second part of our interview. We have with us. .

Norma Luna Rydl: Norma Luna Rydl.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Teresa Luna Medrano.

Dora Luna: Dora Luna.

Ramon Luna: Ramon Luna.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Maria Dolores Luna Vega.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Maria Juanita Luna Navarro [all chuckle].

Leann Castillo: Ok. We are we are gonna continue and finish the family tree. So, we are going to ask you the children that you have - things like that. And Caitlyn had a few more questions on her list that she wanted to ask. So, if you'd like we can start with the questions or we can just go and go through the family tree.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Let's go through the family tree.

Leann Castillo: Ok.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Is that ok?

Leann Castillo: Yeah.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: I wanted to ask if we could have the names of the three children that passed from Antonio Luna and Dolores Luna?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Where's...Norma, where's Ralph?

Norma Luna Rydl: [Laughing] He didn't want to come.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Well they need questions that he knew.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Like what?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: The ones that died the sons, the four that papa Toño. You remember? Uno was Rafael. I know Rafael.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Was he the youngest?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: He was the oldest.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oldest.

Teresa Luna Medrano: That's the only one we know the name of. We don't know the others.

Leann Castillo: Ok.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok, well we'll come back to those.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ok.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Shuffling papers] Ralph?

Leann Castillo: Yes, we'll go with Ralph first. So do you know Ralph's wife's name and...

Norma Luna Rydl: It's Eloisa Luna.

Norma Luna Rydl and Maria Juanita Luna Navarro (together): Eloisa Medrano Luna.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok and their children?

Leann Castillo: Do you know how many children they had?

Norma Luna Rydl: I'll write it down for you.

Leann Castillo: Oh ok.

Norma Luna Rydl: The brothers de papa was Efren Luna Sr.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No, the ones that died before.

Norma Luna Rydl: Ok but its Ramon.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No, no, the first family.

Norma Luna Rydl: Ok well, all I know is what Dad told me. They were eight of them.
(Maria Juanita Luna Navarro's grandfather clock chiming)

Norma Luna Rydl continues: He said that in 1915, there was an epidemic and three died
which was Rafael, Jose, and Maria [Rosa].

Leann Castillo: Ok.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Jose and Maria?

Norma Luna Rydl: Yes.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok. Romi, Romil.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Romulo?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Romulo. Yes, sorry [laughs].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Romulo, what do you need? Luna Sr. [clears throat], he was
married to Olivia Trevino Luna.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Olivia?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Uh huh.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Luna Sylvia?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No, Olivia Trevino Luna. (Looks toward Maria Juanita Luna
Navarro) they're asking questions about Romulo.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Olivia Trevino Luna.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok and Refugio Jr? He was married to [who]?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Idolina

Caitlyn Rodriguez: I-dolina? Like that? Or an E?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Like that.

(Everyone): With an I.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Ok yeah, Idolina Ramirez

Caitlyn Rodriguez: I was spelling it wrong; I was putting - no, I got it. And then Ramon would be Dora Luna?

(Everyone): Dora Luna.

Dora Luna: Gonzalez Luna. Gonzalez, yeah.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Gonzalez Luna.

Leann Castillo: They had Stella, right?

Dora Luna: Stella Yvonne.

Leann Castillo: Stella Yvonne Luna with?

Dora Luna: With an S. Stella not Estella. Stella Yvonne.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: (Spells out name) Stella Y.....

Dora Luna: Yvonne Luna

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Luna.

Dora Luna: Yeah, it's Stella Yvonne Luna Contreras now.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Leann Castillo: We have the list here, so you don't have to write all of it down.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: I talked to Ralph and he said the oldest one was Rafael that passed away and then Maria Rosa, she passed away. There were three kids. And the other one was a Juan.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Juan. Ok and for Roberto? He was married to [who]?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Well, his wife deceased but she was Nora Sylvia Gonzales Luna.

Dora Luna: And I think her Gonzales was with a S. Instead of Z.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: An S? Ok. And Rodolfo?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: El es Rodolfo Domingo.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Rodolfo Mingo.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Rodolfo Domingo.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: His middle name was Domingo. I didn't know that.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh Domingo, ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: He was the only one with a middle name.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: He is married to Celsa Benavidez.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Benavidez.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yes, with a Z.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok, then we're gonna go ahead and go with a.....

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Then it's Cecilia.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It is Maria Cecilia Luna Rios.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: (Repeats name) she was married to?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Ricardo Rios Sr.

Ramon Luna: Rios.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No. He's a senior.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes, a senior.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yes, 'cause his son is a junior.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Leann Castillo: Ok, we can go ahead and go with the children from here.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: We're gonna get the children?

Leann Castillo: Well, Norma is going to write down her siblings also.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok, then we will go with Romilo.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Romulo?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yes, Romulo [laughs]. Yes. And his children?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega and Maria Juanita Luna Navarro (together): Roy Luna.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Senior right? Because he had a junior.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok, Roy Luna Sr.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And Judy.

Norma Luna Rydl: But now Roy, put a little cross because he is already deceased.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: My brother Romulo is also deceased.

Norma Luna Rydl: Put a little cross.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And did you put one on Nora?

Leann Castillo: You said Roy Sr. also passed?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yeah, he's also deceased.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yes, he's deceased.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: (Pointing to Romulo's name) And he is deceased also.

Leann Castillo: Those are the only two children?

(Everyone): Yes.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And for Refugio and Idolina?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: She gave you the list? No? It's Adolfo.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Adolfo Luna.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yeah. Then it's Ida. Is that with an I?

(Everyone else): No, it is A-I-D-A.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: (Spelling name out loud).

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Then it's Lindolfo.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: She was Aida Villanueva.

Teresa Luna Medrano: No, Villeda. Villeda.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Aida Villeda, she still has that name.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Villeda?

Ramon Luna: (Slowly pronouncing) Villeda.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: V-I-L-L-E-D-A.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Luna?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It was Luna Villeda.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Oh, and then it's Alma!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Alma!

Ramon Luna: Alma. And then Lindi.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And then Lindi.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And then Lindi.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega, Maria Juanita Luna Navarro, and Ramon Luna: Lindolfo
[all laugh].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: [Laughing continues] We call him Lindi, but it's Lindolfo.
After. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And then it's Thelma. [Lowers voice] I don't know her last
name, do you all know?

Norma Luna Rydl: Thelma Luna De Leon [Everyone laughs].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I don't know her last name now.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We don't know her married name.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And you called him Lindi?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes, we called him Lindi. It was a nickname.

Leann Castillo: Did Alma have a married last name?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes, De La Garza. And-and Romulo was called Lito.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Lito. Thelma, she doesn't have a married name or?

Dora Luna: That's what she is going to find out.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I know she was Ramirez. But we don't know the married name. Luna, I mean Luna, but we don't know the other one.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh ok. And?

Leann Castillo: We can skip those two because we have their papers.

(Siblings talking and laughing amongst each other).

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh ok. For Roberto and Nora?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: We called him Beto. That's his nickname.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It's Roberto Jr. And that's Bobby. We call him Bobby.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro and Teresa Luna Medrano: It's De Leon. De Leon.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: De Leon (adds to Thelma's name).

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Thelma Luna De Leon.

(Door Opens, Roseann Bacha Garza Arrives)

(Everyone): Hello! Hi!

Dr. Bacha Garza: They started recording? Oh ok, shhh.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok and then it's Roberto Luna.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Roberto Luna. It's Bobby.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Roberto Jr, what I'm sorry?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Bobby.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Bobby Luna, ok and. . .

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And [laughs]. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Rolando!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: [Laughs] Rolando! I couldn't come up with Rolando. [Laughs] Rolando.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And then Sylvia Nora.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Sylvia Nora. Luna?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes, and no she's Garcia?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Garcia. Do you need to know who she is married to? No? Or we just do it like that?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Just the kids.

Leann Castillo: (Looks to Bacha Garza) How far are we extending the tree?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Like just their children or?

Bacha-Garza: However far they want to go.

Leann Castillo: Ok, so however far you wanna extend.

(Everybody): That's fine. Just the kids.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Put a number on each one. I'm number 7.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I'm number 9.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Just so we can put it in order of the siblings [all laugh].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Laughs] I get confused so easily.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Because if you already got the siblings, you can always go back to the number 'cause you have them in order.

(Family Tree papers shuffling and being written on by siblings)

Caitlyn Rodriguez: She's working on the Ralph and Eloisa one.

Leann Castillo: Oh, it's right here.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Just put him as number one because he is the first one.

Norma Luna Rydl: Yeah, he's the first one.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok, first one and Ramon is.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ramon is the four.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And this is mine, number nine. I already put it there.

Teresa Luna Medrano: You're going to have a ton of those.

Caitlyn Rodriguez and Leann Castillo: [Laughing] I know!

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: This is Rodolfo's. But I don't know if we already got him. These are his grandkids. I don't know if you need these.

Leann Castillo: We can add them if you'd like.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: [Laughing] Yeah cause its still part of the branch. The branches.

Leann Castillo: [Laughing] Yeah. No one had any more babies.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I think well I think I have the youngest one, right? A one year old. Ryan. I didn't write it.

Norma Luna Rydl: I need to put those for dad.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And they have great grandchildren.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: They have great grandchildren, we don't yet.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And your children?

Leann Castillo: She doesn't have any.

Norma Luna Rydl: No, I don't.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh well, let's go on to eight. Or do we have a paper?

Leann Castillo: No.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Eight is Juanita.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Eight is Juanita, Juanita.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Do you have your list or?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: What?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Your list.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Oh! My children, first is Rene, Ricardo. That's his middle name.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Laughs] Oh, ok.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Then there is Omar. Ah, sorry! It's Jaime. And Omar.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And Omar.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ay Omar, it's causes he's the tallest one [laughing].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And?

Leann Castillo: Do they have wives that we can add or?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Are we gonna put the wives?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes. They said - well I put mine the wives.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Well only Omar. It's Alonda.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Alonda, like that?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No es Alonda?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Gail.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: But what is her name?

Norma Luna Rydl: That is her given name, Alonda Gail.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Spelled like this?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It's G-A-I-L.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And do you have her maiden last name?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It's Ibarra with an I.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ibarra, ok.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: That's it for me. Unless you want the grandkids?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: We can put the grandkids.

Leann Castillo: If you want grandkids, yes.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: The grandkids?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I put them in the paper. Did you write them down?

Teresa Luna Medrano: No, I didn't write them down.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Well she told us to write it.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And do each of them have kids?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No, not each of them. Rene has two, three. Three. Brittany Ann. Brianna Eilene.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: With an E? Like this?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yes, with an E. Like that. And Renee. R-E-N-E-E. Elizabeth.

[Home phone begins to ring].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Should we get - no, no birthdays, right?

Leann Castillo: No, no birthdays.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Wait, do they want - do you all want your birthdays on the book?

Teresa Luna Medrano and Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No.

Teresa Luna Medrano: We have no birthdays.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok and not for Antonio and Dolores, right?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Well, these we can because they're deceased.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: They're from the 1800s.

Teresa Luna Medrano: So that's fine. But not us.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Are marriage dates ok?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Well I don't have any of those dates. I would have to go research them.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok. Well just for your dates. Just for your marriage dates.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Our marriage dates?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: That's fine.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Ok, well mine is March 18, 1966.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: We already had it. That's the ones that we were asked the other day.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yes.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yes, but I don't think I got it for other siblings.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: The other ones.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Well we would have to ask them, right?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: [Laughing] Yes.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: But Ralph did say his through, right?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yes, he did. We have four marriage dates.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Their anniversaries.
(Phone ringing again)

Maria Dolores Luna Vega speaking to Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: [Laughing]
Disconnect it.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: (Ringing continues) Take it off and it won't make that sound.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ok well I have two grandkids for Omar. It's Jacob Omar. And Megan Marie. Do you remember when your dad got married?

Norma Luna Rydl: On November 27, 1954.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: 1954?

Norma Luna Rydl: Yes.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Ok who else?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok we have - yours, Dolores.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And Sylvia's.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: I don't know Sylvia's.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And we need Romulo.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: He is deceased.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Shuffling papers] Romulo, Refugio, Ramon, Roberto. Rodolfo.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And can I have your children?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Oh! Mine are on there. Number nine.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Number nine? Ok and so Cecilia?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Cecilia's, well it's Maria Cecilia Luna Rios. Her husband is. . .

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Shuffling papers] Oh yeah, and her children?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Her children are let me see, Melissa Ann.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Montes.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Montes.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: I put Rios first, right?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Mhmm.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Michelle, I don't know if she's had, if she left her name. Michelle. . .

Norma Luna Rydl: She just got divorced, so Salinas.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Salinas.

Norma Luna Rydl: Rios Salinas.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Should we keep her, her last name?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Do you know Michelle's name? Did she keep the name Salinas?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: She kept it.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And then Ricardo. Ricky is Ricardo Rios.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Rios Jr.?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Jr. She's got grandchildren.

Norma Luna Rydl: But on that one, put Dr. Ricardo Rios.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh doctor, ok I'm sorry.

Norma Luna Rydl: [Giggles] He's a doctor.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Wasn't there another doctor in the family?

Norma Luna Rydl: Dr. Dusty.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: With Ralph.

Norma Luna Rydl: With Ralph.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: He's a grandkid.

Leann Castillo: [Looking through list of family under Ralph] Oh, Dusty you said right?

Leann Castillo: D-Dana. This is Dana?

Norma Luna Rydl: That's Dana right there.

[Kitchen utensils clanking]

Norma Luna Rydl: He's Eduardo Dusty Luna.

Leann Castillo: Oh ok, I was like looking for Dusty as a first name!

Norma Luna Rydl: So, he is Dr. Eduardo Dusty Luna.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Then Dusty is his nickname.

Norma Luna Rydl: No. No, it's his given name.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yeah, no but.

Norma Luna Rydl: It's not a nickname. It's Eduardo Dusty Luna.

Leann Castillo: I was looking for Dusty, I was like 'I don't see Dusty' [laughing].

Norma Luna Rydl: Noooo! [Laughing] And see, we know him as Dusty because that's his middle name.

Leann Castillo: Uh huh.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Dr. Dusty. Those are the only two doctors?

Norma Luna Rydl: Mhmm.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Norma Luna Rydl: That we know of, orita. Some are in the planning, right? Esta, Aunt Terry, your grandson? Isn't he in the planning of doctor?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Oh yes, but he's in the beginning.

Norma Luna Rydl: In the pre-med right now.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok. Well we will put them as doctors. And then the rest we have on papers?

Leann Castillo: Mhmm, yes.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Leann Castillo: You want to have them answer the questions you have for them?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: The ones we talked about in the car?

Leann Castillo: Yeah [both starts laughing].

Leann Castillo: It's 'cause we were on our way here and we talked about how there's not really any romance in our generation because you told us the story.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: The courtships?

Leann Castillo: Yeah, the courtships, about how the love notes were under the stone. And we were talking about how 'no one does that anymore'! So that was her question, she came up with a question.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh! [Gasping] That, what was my question?

Leann Castillo: Your question was 'whenever you met back then, was that immediately your significant other that you were going to be with?'

Teresa Luna Medrano: No.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: No?

Teresa Luna Medrano: No. Not me. What about you?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Mine was. I had like friends. But never a boyfriend [giggling] until I met my husband.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And what are your thoughts on divorce or?

Teresa Luna Medrano: It's a very hard stage but it depends on that unit. How they can live with each other and their family. You know? And if it's best for the family then it's good.

Norma Luna Rydl: Yes.

Teresa Luna Medrano: It depends. You know every case is different.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: But we're very hardcore on the religion, so when you get married that's it.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: You swim, or you sink [everyone laughing].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: But, we're very faithful to that, you know? Our parents taught us that, you know, they didn't want divorce.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: What else can we ask? And, these, should I ask?

Leann Castillo: Mhmm. You can ask them.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: 'Cause we mostly did all. Did certain family members go into farming as a choice? And after, like grandkids or brothers or sisters?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Well we married, but we didn't marry farmers. We married; you know people that are out in the world.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Community.

Teresa Luna Medrano: In the community and they worked hourly jobs or labor jobs so our brothers are the ones more to pull on that because they were the ones that were farming.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Now, I always wanted to learn how to drive a tractor or do things, but they wouldn't let us. It was like you stay at home and help your mother and the boys do the work in the fields. And I always wanted because you always need it. Now, I wish I could've learned so I don't have to rely on anyone else to do it. You know what I mean?

Teresa Luna Medrano: They didn't let us because back then, it was a man's world. And all the ones that were out there in the fields were men. And they used to have the Braceros. My dad would hire people to come and help him. And they were all men, so us to be out there wasn't logical. And we had a lot of work at home. We had the laundry; we had the washing. Everything.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No maid (everyone laughing).

Teresa Luna Medrano: Hey, the maids were - we did for our family, you know? We all had a chore to do or an obligation. And our obligation was to help our mom. And we didn't have the obligation until we were grown, you know? Twelve, thirteen years. So, it was hard, you know? But we did it and we didn't question it. We had to do it.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And as for my brothers, I don't think they really had a choice. It was like it was already part of their. . .

Teresa Luna Medrano: Life.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega continues: They were raised, growing up. So farming was gonna be for them. Yeah. That was -

Teresa Luna Medrano: But, it's a different generation, you know?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: There were some that eventually did break off and started other outside jobs. And the ones, some stayed, and they did farming. Like my older brother, right? He got an outside job. Like in agriculture. And who else? That was it, no? Mostly all were farming?

Teresa Luna Medrano: They would go and look for jobs. But they always would come back to farming. It was their call, you know? So, I think they tried most, but they had their call to farming. So, they liked it.

Norma Luna Rydl: And I think one of the questions that they were going to ask if the Braceros was there any females hired?

Teresa Luna Medrano: No.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No.

Norma Luna Rydl: So that was one question that it was only the men like.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Males. They were just males.

Norma Luna Rydl: They were here only for maybe about three months, right? And whatever the harvest was in. And then -

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Well I don't know because they had living quarters for them. Mhmm. They wouldn't stay there all the time. We couldn't get near, you know. We would sometimes peek and see. [All laughing] Because their food smelled awesome!

But we had to go back, you know. We couldn't stay long. Right? I remember that.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So, as the women of the family, did that make you want to work after you got married? 'Cause you know, they made you, well not made you but. . .

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I saw how my mom worked so hard with all the chores that she had. I said that this wasn't for me. I wanted something better for myself, so I strived to go to school and college and stuff. Because of what I saw. I didn't want - the work was hard, and it was every day the same sort of thing, the same thing.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Routine.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yeah.

Norma Luna Rydl: Dad always forced the education. That like Dolores is saying, the work is hard. And I mean, so that's why he would like at the time with the Braceros, you would have people picking cotton and it wasn't the machines. And they had the people picking the cotton. He would take us to go pick cotton and he says, well that way that this is hard work and you all will go to education.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So that you would experience it.

Norma Luna Rydl: Yes, you'd experience it. Well were taken out there, picking the cotton and.

(Caitlyn laughing)

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: My mother always strived for education. She wanted us to go to school. At least the girls.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: [Shuffling papers] Is your family superstitious?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes, we believed in some things. . . [all laughing]... Like enpacho. Like if you ate something and then you had a stomachache, they would take us to get rubbed and take in some oils, you know. There was also se le callo la mollera, (head soft spot) the crest here, when babies don't suck right. So, we would go take them to a midwife, and they would fix it, you know, things like that.

Teresa Luna Medrano: And that is true. Because we did that.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: But, that's about it.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: We put a quarter [on the belly button] so that they would be real pretty. [Everyone laughing] Yeah, things like that. And the ojo.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Oh yeah.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega continues: We believe in “el ojo”. The “el mal ojo”, you know. To us, I mean, I’ve experienced, and I believe it. So, it depends on everyone’s way of thinking.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Have enough electricity to break a glass- bckk!
[Everyone laughing].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: [Still laughing] The vibes, right?

(Maria Juanita Luna Navarro’s grandfather clock strikes another hour).

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Those are about the main things. Of the superstitions. Which are mostly cultural.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yeah, I was going to say, it’s in the culture, yeah. And then, has there been a shift in familial quality time because of technology?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Oh definitely! I remember growing up, we used to go every Sunday, to go visit my grandparents in San Juan and it was an awesome thing. Because we never really got out. To visit our uncles on my mother’s side. Because they lived not close so, now you don’t see much of that. **[Light chatting and clanking of dishes in kitchen]** Visiting or people giving each other a hand, it’s everybody to their own, you know? I miss that, where we used to bond more than we do now. Everybody does for themselves. When it used to be that they would help each other in the past.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And what traditions have been lost over time pertaining to family or family values?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Well, for one, people are living together before they get married. [Laughing] I mean that was never allowed and now, it’s acceptable or pregnancy, getting pregnant.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: What?

Norma Luna Rydl: They - yes, but you’re talking about the ‘70s, ‘80s, that your job was that you gotta teach morals to your students.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ohh!

Norma Luna Rydl continues: And here you are, you know, again, going back to our culture, that you’re supposed to [live by] example.

[Maria Dolores Luna Vega calling Maria Juanita Luna Navarro in the background]

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: They’re asking questions.

Norma Luna Rydl: So, that's one of the changes that. . .

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: That was an impact. And now, they call us 'old school' because of the new way of thinking. But this is a problem in our new generation. That they don't take these things at heart. Respecting themselves and others.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yeah.

Norma Luna Rydl: Our society has gotten really laid back. And also, the mannerism is. . .

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Terrible!

Norma Luna Rydl: Our kids would come in, being as educators, they would come in and we would say good morning and no one. We still try to instill that.

Leann Castillo: Mhmm.

Norma Luna Rydl: Because it's really hard because a lot of the parents expect you to do their job.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes.

Norma Luna Rydl: And doing that. And when you do and they go home and they go to their way of living, you know? We would talk to them about their experience or whatever because that's the way we were brought up. You know? I would say, well we don't do that. We talk politely.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Like 'May I go to the restroom?'

Norma Luna Rydl: Please and thank you.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And, I was just talking to somebody yesterday telling them about how the discipline is so different from where we went. I never remember a teacher re-directing our behavior. Like, you'd get into the classroom and you would get there and sit down and not give the teacher problems! And now, it's chaos. Cooking in the kitchen, spoon being hit on a pan, there's a group setting and cooperative learning, I mean the kids aren't being self-sufficient. They're just learning from each other. To me, I'm so structured that it's hard for me to get that.

Norma Luna Rydl: M-my thing is, is the structure. Ours is structure. We were brought up with structure. So.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: There was nothing wrong! Because there were no discipline problems. And now that's all, they just get away with everything.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: That's true.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Well, our problem was that when you were told to do something, you better do it by the time you came back. One look and that was it! It better be done.

Norma Luna Rydl: Were you told also like us? If you get it at school, you're gonna get it at home?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Mhmm.

Norma Luna Rydl: And I don't know, I'm gonna behave at school, because I'm not gonna get it at home and over here. And see, we were spanked in school.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Slapped, spanked, pinched, you know, stepped on, [laughing] hit with a ruler.

Norma Luna Rydl: So, you know, you just got a look and you know, you learned from your experience.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And we accepted that! You behaved!

Teresa Luna Medrano: We had one teacher, when I was in junior high. If your foot was out of the chair.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: On the aisle.

Teresa Luna Medrano continues: On the aisle, she'd come and she'd step on your foot.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And grind it.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Or!.....If you had your hand like this, she would come back and she would, you know. That was discipline.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Or!.....If you weren't sitting straight, she would come through the back and she would hit you on the back. [Laughing] And you would just straighten up. She was a wack.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And we learned! I have never forgotten her. 'Cause I had her, too.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We all had her.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: She was an awesome teacher. She had been in the military, so she was a math teacher.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: What was her name?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Miss Ruth.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Miss Ruth!

[Everyone laughs].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Miss Ruth.

Maria Juanita Luan Navarro: Yes, Miss Ruth.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Miss Ruth.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It was middle school.

Norma Luna Rydl: Oh! Middle school.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes, junior high.

Norma Luna Rydl: Which is our administration building now?

Teresa Luna Medrano: She was a wonderful teacher.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: You learned respect. You learned to obey. You learned to follow directions.

Norma Luna Rydl: You said the word, because she was so strict, because she was so, you know, structured.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: You were scared of her but at the same time you gave her great respect.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yes, that's what she wanted.

Norma Luna Rydl: She respected you back.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And that grows on you. That when you go to the next class, you behaved.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: You behaved. And the teachers were, I mean, we were sitting in rows, listening to the lesson, doing our work, everything! Everything! You wouldn't have problems at all and now, oh my gosh, you're sort of scared to go into a classroom. Elementary! You're not talking about middle school or high school. The elementary is rough. So, it's pretty sad. You see a big change.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Maybe it's because we were not brought up with material, with things. We never experienced things.

Norma Luna Rydl: When we were punished, go to your room. That was your room and that was it. There's no tv, there's no telephone.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: They never punished us. They just gave you a look. Mama never knew about sending us to our rooms. Mama, no.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Or kneeling us on rocks or anything like that. Like on my husband's side, they would do things like that. It was a different generation.

Teresa Luna Medrano: No, but our generation had no automatic washer. It was a "bano con el tallador". And then from there the ringer washer came in. Where you put your hand in there, you would have to crawl out.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We all rolled in. [All laughing] All our hands got rolled in.

Teresa Luna Medrano: And then during the winter, your hands would go like this because you had to hang clothes outside. It was cold! Yeah so, we had no dryer.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And it was rows of pants and shirts.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Diapers! [Laughing] But no, it was - it was an era that you just took in time and enjoyed it. Now we look back and we laugh. Well because in a way, it was educational for us to be able to cope with life. You know, so I think a lot of our generation are stronger in from the bottom going up. And our kids have it a little easier, because we help them out.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Our kids we brought them up like that.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We tried.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: But I think when they took away discipline in the schools, it began- that began a little problem. You know because the kids knew they could get away with not being punished or anything. Yeah so. . .

Leann Castillo: Did you enjoy living on the farm?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Oh yeah! We loved it! [Laughing] We were roaming free!

Teresa Luna Medrano: Barefooted all the time!

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: In the trees, playing.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No toys, 'cause our toys were like pieces of wood or like corn husks, stuff like that.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Or like skillets.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yeah, we'd be cooking-

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Mudpies!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yeah, cooking mudpies. [Everyone laughs].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: All we would do is just hit the ground running and if we got a sticker, all we had to do was. . .

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Take it off.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Run your foot through the, the dirt and keep running!

Teresa Luna Medrano: No, our, do you know how to call that? When you put the numbers and you skip through?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Oh hopscotch?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Scotch hop! With pieces of glass, you know? You would go and yours was green and hers was a blue glass. But you know, we didn't have cement so, we did have cement but, when we played, we made the deal in the dirt. So, we could through the glass, and everybody had their colored glass. But they were pieces of glass or a certain rock or. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Objects. Different objects.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yes, different objects. We would inter-change them.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Jacks or a rope. That's where.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah, our toys were jacks or gum, or como? Yeah, jacks.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We never got a bicycle, did we?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yes, we had bicycles!

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We had bicycles? I don't remember bicycles.

[Everyone laughs].

Teresa Luna Medrano: Well we- the boys had bicycles and we used to ride them. We didn't have girl bikes. We had the boy bikes.

Leann Castillo: Did your brothers let you use them?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Well when they weren't home, yes. [All laugh] Yeah, well you know, you'd get a flat tire really quick! So, you'd put it back really quick! [All laugh] Well, that was it, you know? No, we enjoyed it, they were-

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: It was fun!

Teresa Luna Medrano: They were mostly, more like dads. They would tell you; you'd better do what they said also. Or move over, you know. 'Cause we were smaller. But they always took care of us, they still do.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Mhmm, they still do.

Teresa Luna Medrano: We don't visit each other as much! 'Cause everybody has large families, you know? But we keep in contact. Somebody is sick, we notify each other. Things like that. But, the obligations there. We take care of each other. That's what my mom and dad always said, you take care of this little one and the other one that was higher than me, he had to take care of me, you know? [Laughs] It was just down the row. But, yeah.

Leann Castillo: Do you have any specific memories that pop out to you? Any funny ones or just any good memories in general like on the farm that you have with your siblings?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I remember when they would slaughter calves. And it'd be-or pigs- it'd be an all-day affair where everybody would skin it and you know, gut it out. And with the pigs they'd make tamales and chicharrones and carnitas. It was awesome! I remember it, 'cause you know the food was good! You know? Authentically good!

Teresa Luna Medrano: My dad would have those holes in the ground, you know. And they would put the [beef] in there. They'd fix them up with. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Burlap sacks.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Burlap sacks! And then they'd put it overnight.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: They started like one night before. All night and one day before.

Teresa Luna Medrano: And we don't do that anymore. But it was just at that era when they had that. And then you'd start buying it when you went to mass. [Laughs] 'Cause it was easier to buy it, you know? So, we'd have that. But when we used to do it, it was just when we had a slaughtering of the cow or. . .

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Pig.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah. Cabritos.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: They were raised there on the farm. Like my mom would raise it with corn. She had us going to the fields to pick up all the corn that was left after it was harvested and then, she'd feed the pigs and they were like corn-fed, so the meat was good!

[Everyone laughs].

Teresa Luna Medrano: With the tamales, that was - we picked up the corn.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: From scratch!

Teresa Luna Medrano: And we take off the husks and then we'd put them in sacks. And then the corn, we put it aside and then we had to grind the corn off the cob and then my mom would cook the mistamal and then we'd wash it and then we'd take it to the mill. Then, we would come back and we'd start. We had the maza and then wash the husks and then start doing it.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And my mother kept doing tamales, I don't know, it was up until 1993. She passed.

Norma Luna Rydl: '93, I think.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: She passed in January of '93. So, she was still making tamales. She loved tamales! My mother. Oh my God! And she started from scratch!

Leann Castillo: Did she like to show you how it was made or would she?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Oh yeah! She showed us!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Now we learned, but now our kids, they don't want to. No, like my daughter.

Norma Luna Rydl: I'm one of them! I'm one of them. And now look at the generation, they always had the- get it going. I was real good at spreading it [all laugh] you know? But their thing is sometimes when we get together, yes, we had our chore to do, our job, but they have a tendency of doing it on their own too. They make tamales on their own. I mean, the whole process. Mom would get everything, 'I'm already done'! Aunt Janie, the same thing! Dolores and Terry, tambien! They've already done it also! They're done.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: We had to learn because my mother passed away. And wanted to carry on the tradition.

[Maria Juanita Luna Navarro's grandfather clock chiming].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And she was a very meticulous person. About. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Cooking!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And cleanliness, you know? She didn't really want us [in the kitchen] and for our hair to be back and our hands very washed. Anything we touched, go wash our hands again! And real picky, you know? So, we learned that and now we're the same with our kids and my husband. They're sort of like, 'Gosh, why do you have to be so picky?' Y dije, well that's the way I learned! And that's the way - if you go and that's it! Your hand is dirty, go wash it!

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Get sick. So, she said, get sick, so you wash your hands and rewash your hands and rewash your hands.

[Everyone laughs].

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No licking, no tasting, no nothing.

[Everyone laughs].

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No licking the spoons or none of that!

Teresa Luna Medrano: You'd taste it with your serving spoon.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: You can pour it.

Teresa Luna Medrano: But then you'd have to get a clean spoon!

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: You could pour it on your hand, and it'd be hot and you would taste it. 'Oh, it's ok with salt. [All laugh] But you wouldn't use the same spoon. We're good at cooking! Because Mama was a good cook!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: My mom was a good cook.

Leann Castillo: Do you think you're still going to try and enforce your grandchildren or your children to try?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Well, my daughter like I said, doesn't really like cooking. But my sons, I've taught them, and they cook. They do all the cooking. And they'll call me. 'How do I do this calabaza con pollo?' Or 'How do you do the carne guisada?' And they've learned, they know how to do it. I don't know about you alls.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah, my kids, my boys, I have three boys and three girls and they all like to cook! But, my boys they all- they're all up north, you know in Texas, but they're all up there. And they'll call me, 'Mom, what did you say to put in there?' [All laugh] Comino, sal, pepper. [Laughs] 'The comino, mom?', 'Yes, ajo, garlic and/or gravy!' [or] 'How do you make your gravy?' I think things like that. But they all learned to cook. Like Dolores said, they all learned to cook. And I always stressed it, that they needed to learn if they were going to college cause up there - I said 'cause Mom is not gonna be up there. [Laughs] And you learn so they did. They're very good cooks. They do their laundry and everything.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: My sons, they're good at barbecuing. At least one of them is. but, my grand-daughters, Brittany, she'll call me. 'What do you put in this?' How do you make rice?' So, I'll tell her. And the other, Megan, my other grand daughter, also calls me once in a while. She wants something that she can't have because she's in San Antonio and 'it's not the same, Grandma, it's not the same as yours, but I'm trying.' So, they're the only two, I think that I have that want to learn to cook.

Norma Luna Rydl: I get it the easy way.

[Everyone laughs].

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And I think the last one was, what was your school mascot and colors? That's the last one of them.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: We were mostly Bobcats.

Teresa Luna Medrano: We were all Bobcats! Red, white and blue.

Norma Luna Rydl: It was the original school, the only high school. And it was the Bobcats.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Now I have a granddaughter there. [Laughs] She's playing volleyball with the Bobcats.

(Maria Juanita Luna Navarro brings out her bobcat) [Everyone laughs].

Leann Castillo: I'm gonna take a picture of it.

Norma Luna Rydl: There you go.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Yeah, take one.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Where did you get that, Juana?

Maria Juanita Luna Vega: I've had it for years!

(Noises can be heard from the kitchen-as Maria Juanita Luna Navarro is cooking)

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro continues: I think everybody was a bobcat.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Our children now-mine are Cougars.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Mine were Bobcats.

Teresa Luna Medrano: I have Bobcats, Redskins, and then Panthers! Only my kids are the only 'este como quien se dise' that, the Redskins because they're from Donna.

Leann Castillo: Is that all the questions?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: That's all I had.

13 minutes later. . .

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So, Ramon graduated high school?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: [Shuffling papers] You can tell them, and I can make a note to ask him.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So, Ralph?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Ralph graduated from high school.

Norma Luna Rydl: And he went. . .

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: One year to college, I believe.

Norma Luna Rydl: Yes.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok and Romulo?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: No, he went to 8th grade?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It was 8th grade?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah it was 8th grade.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: [Laughs] That's right because you graduated in 8th grade to go on higher.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: They don't have graduation for 8th grade anymore.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No.

Caitlyn Rodriguez and Teresa Luna Medrano (together): Refugio?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Refugio Jr. also did until 8th grade, I believe.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes, I remember Cuco is 8th grade.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Rodolfo, tambien.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No, he went higher.

Teresa Luna Medrano: He went to high school.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: He went to 11th. I think he's 11th.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So, Ramon graduated high school and Roberto?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It's Ramon. He graduated.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Is that the first one?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yeah 'cause I heard that one first. And so, Roberto?

Teresa Luna Medrano: 11th, I think?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No, ten! It was 10th!

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yes, it was 10th.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And Rodolfo was 11th.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And Tere?

Teresa Luna Medrano: I graduated. That's it. I didn't go to college.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: High school.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Tere and Aunt Janie, high school. Ok and?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Janie?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: High school.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok and Dolores?

Teresa Luna Medrano: She went all the way!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: All the way to my Master's! [All laugh] A Master's in counseling.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Aw I forgot to capitalize Master's.

Teresa Luna Medrano: [Laughs] Ah capital!

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And then Cecilia, high school.

Teresa Luna Medrano: High school and vocational school. She went to the junior college, not the vocational school for accounting. Here in Mcallen.

Leann Castillo: So, are you still counseling today? Is that what you do?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No, I'm retired. I'm retired. I sub.

Teresa Luna Medrano: She says she's tired too.

(Everyone laughs).

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: You know, you strive so hard to get your degrees and then once you retire, it's like they treat you, it's like worth nothing. I'm sorry to discourage you.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Eh, I'm not gonna graduate.

(Everyone laughs).

Norma Luna Rydl: No, no.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: No, it's like they don't honor you or pay you higher.

Teresa Luna Medrano: It's because it's politics, right? You all strive to get a better pay and all that.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It takes time.

Norma Luna Rydl: We can't understand that we've been educators, and lawyers get way more! The doctors I can see, but you know, still. Everybody does their job.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Education is the core of everything.

Norma Luna Rydl: Yeah!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Right? That's where it all branches out. It's underpaid.

Norma Luna Rydl: Underpaid.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yeah, it's true.

Norma Luna Rydl: When I got - when you got started teaching, how much did you get paid?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I started like \$600 in 1973. That was the whole year.

Teresa Luna Medrano: That's what she is going into. Archaeo-

Norma Luna Rydl: Archae- no, anthro-

Leann Castillo: Anthropology.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Anthropology. And you're going into?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: History.

Teresa Luna Medrano: History.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: I had a minor in history.

[Everyone laughs].

10 minutes later...

Teresa Luna Medrano: So, it would be Maria Cleophas Garza. Then, it was her brother Ignacio Garza.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: And this is interesting, you know why? Because actually, we were De La Garza. But our grandfather took all De La because it was too long and he put Garza, you see? So actually, we're De La Garza.

Teresa Luna Medrano: He thought it was just a figure of speech. You know like say, Luna de Medrano. Something like that. But it was a given name! De La Garza. But nos quedamos Garza. It's shorter anyways. [Laughs] Ok, so then Ignacio and then, from him, it's, Guadalupe.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Guadalupe.

Teresa Luna Medrano: She's a female. I don't know if she had a middle name. And then it's. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Guadalupe is a lady. So.....

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Yes.

[Sounds of tortilla chips crunching].

Teresa Luna Medrano: Well, I think we should put her last name. Bueno, put Garza Tovar.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: That way you can distinguish her as a female. And then it was Pedro Garza. And then from Tio Pedro, sigue, - Nicolas. No, it was Tia.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: How many were they?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Six. Mama, Tio Nacho, mi Tio Pedro, then mi Tio Nico, no! My Tia Calixtra Urrea! So, Garza Urrea.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: How do I spell that?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: U-R-R-E-A.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: U-R-R-E-A.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Mhmm.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Garza?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Yes.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Ok.

Teresa Luna Medrano: And este, Nicolas.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Nicolas.

Teresa Luna Medrano: How many is that?

Caitlyn Rodriguez: One, two, three, four, five, six.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah, that's it.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: So, he was the baby?

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah, he was the baby.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And Calixtra, look, this is her name. C-A-L-I-X-T-R-A.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: Calixtra.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: She's the only living one.

Teresa Luna Medrano: You don't pronounce the X. You're pronouncing the X. It's Calixtra. The X is silent.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: It's silent.

Teresa Luna Medrano: Yeah, it's like the double L. It's silent. You know like in 'villa', the double L. In ingles, cuando- when I went up, when I was up north for a time and Villarreal, I wasn't sure. They took the name and pronounced it 'Vi-la-real' instead of Villarreal. [All laugh]. 'What's your name?' I couldn't find it! And I couldn't find it in the little computer! And I said, 'Can you please spell it? I can't find it!' [(Sounds of utensils clanking on dishware)] And I said, 'Villarreal!' [All laugh]. I was embarrassed because you know, their speech over there is by syllable. I learned because despues, you know! I had to, you know, figure it out! We want it with a Spanish accent because we speak Spanish.

Caitlyn Rodriguez: And did they have nicknames? 'Cause I heard 'Cali'.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Cali, Nacho.

Teresa Luna Medrano: That was Ignacio.

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Nic, Pete, Lupe was Guadalupe. And Pete, se decilla Petey. His son changed his name. It was Pedro Garza. And he changed it to Pete Crane.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: He couldn't get a job in Houston!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: They wouldn't give him a job, so he had to change it to an Anglo name so they would give him one.

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: And he's an engineer. He looks like an Anglo!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: He's got blue eyes!

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Blue!

Maria Dolores Luna Vega: Super white. But the name didn't help him, so he changed it, so he could get a better. . .

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: He never got an interview!

Norma Luna Rydl: But did that change?

Maria Dolores Luna Vega and Maria Juanita Luna Navarro together: Yes!

Norma Luna Rydl: ‘Cause they were in Bay City, right?

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: Bay City.

Norma Luna Rydl: But he was in Houston, but he would have bids and stuff like that.

[Maria Juanita Luna Navarro’s grandfather clock chiming again]

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro: When he graduated college, he couldn’t get a job. He changed his name and he got a job right away, very good!

Appendix X

Family Traditions

As a little girl of seven, I always stood by the big square kitchen table observing and patiently watching my mother cook her delicious food. She would tell me, “Ven hija y mira para que te enseñe hacer las cosas.” Everyone gathered early for breakfast and lunch to enjoy the meal. The food consisted of hot flour tortillas with potato, egg and chorizo or menudo for breakfast. For lunch on special occasions we ate cabrito guisado or chicken mole with all the side dishes, which included spanish rice, potato salad, frijoles a la charra, cole slaw, bread or tortillas. Traditionally every year mom would raise and feed a small, farm fed piglet. We would fatten it up by feeding it corn we picked from the cornfield. We took off the husks and grated the corn before feeding the pig. By December it would be a nice 300-pound hog. Everyone would gather round to take part in an all day affair which included killing, skinning and preparing pigskins for frying, and putting the meat in a big baño to cook over a huge pile of mesquite fire wood. My mother would patiently cut and prepare the meat to be fried to a nice and crispy point. Once the pork meat was ready the family would serve themselves by grabbing a tortilla, put the meat inside, squeeze lemon over the meat and shake some salt on it; the taco was so delicious we would eat it in a zap. Soon after eating, everyone helped in making tamales and the women including neighbors, aunts, sisters, and sisters-in-law would put on their aprons and begin the traditional tamalera. Some would rinse the corn husks, others would start the pork meat to boil. Once it was ready women would chop up the meat and add spices. Another person would rinse the homemade nixtamal kernels to be taken to the tortillera to have it processed into masa and brought back. By this time you would get all the ingredients ready to knead the masa. Once everything was ready for

Appendix X - Continued

making the tamales, all the women would gather to start spreading the masa on the corn husks, others would fill in the cooked pork meat in the middle of the husk, roll it up and place the tamales in the tamalera. The tamalera would be filled with water and the tamales would cook for an hour and a half, just in time for supper. Everyone there would join in to eat tamales, fresh boiled corn and then top it off with buñuelos which was the late night dessert that everyone enjoyed. You could hear them saying "todo esta bien bueno, María!" Yes, this was a festive time—a traditional time of the year for everyone to come together and celebrate, December the 24th.

My brothers were avid hunters, around November and December they would kill deer, wild turkeys and pigs. This too was a tradition every year and all this meat was also used to make guisados, tamales and mole. For example, the wild turkeys were brought back after a long day and my mother, sisters and myself would prepare this huge pot with water. We would have the water reach a boiling point, and then we would dunk the dead turkey in the boiling water and take it out immediately. Then we would pluck the feathers out, and singe any feathers that were left. We would clean the bird with salt. Then we would set up a table with a cutting board and knife and would gut it, we would cut it up nicely in order to make wild turkey mole. We would eat the mole with sides like potato salad, rice, beans and bread. Boy what a big family tradition!

Another tradition in my family was the cooking of cabrito or 'kid'. This was an awesome tradition every year in the summer. Around July or August my dad would go and buy several live cabritos. He would tie them up or pin them up the night before and not feed them so they would be ready for the next day. At the crack of dawn, all of us would get up to get started. We would kill the cabritos, hang them up to skin and quarter

Appendix X - Continued

them to pieces. My mom, sisters and I would help with the preparation of the guisado as well as the baking and cooking of the food. By noon everything was ready. My parents would invite the priest from our church. He would come around 10:30 a.m. and would greet us, bless our home and then we would all get into vehicles and he would pray and bless the farmland and crops. When we would get back we would wash up and he would bless the food. He would always be served baked cabrito with chile de cascabel, rice and potato salad as his meal. We would also have nice and cold sweet watermelon, melon just ready to be devoured. Everyone looked forward to this yearly event.

Birthdays, well that was another ongoing festivity in my family tradition. All of our immediate family's yearly birthdays were celebrated at times in early dawn. A conjunto would show up by the birthday person's window and would sing the mañanitas to him or her. By that time my mother would be at the kitchen cooking a special breakfast and also getting the hot cinnamon chocolate ready. There was always a big 100-piece cake to be eaten after the birthday person would blow the brightly lighted candles. I remember the fun times when the gifts were handed to the birthday celebrity and they would open them. I also remember participating with the serving of breakfast and handing out the presents especially to Romulo, an awesome brother. On one of his birthdays, my parents gave him a great big motorcycle and he asked me, "Do you want to ride on it? Come on and I'll give you a ride." We rode in front of our yard. As I recall, this was in the late '50s. My late brother and I enjoyed our great times together. Another instance I remember very clearly is on my Dad's 50th birthday, when my family gave a big barbeque for him. We slaughtered a calf and processed the meat and then barbequed for the event. A lot of friends and family members attended and socialized. I

Appendix X - Continued

also remember my dad saying, "everyone enjoy yourself, the food is ready!" People were mingling with long time friends. I could see by his smile that he was happy. Who would have known that four years later he would die in a tragic car accident. After my dad's death things seemed to have changed. Our family was not as united as before. My brothers and sisters began to get married and started their own families. Particularly my brothers became isolated from the family. My sisters and I saw this so we began to do things together to try to keep the traditions alive, but it was very difficult now because everyone had their own families to tend to.

If you could only grasp time and bring it back, it would be great, but that isn't possible. I am trying now to continue some of those family traditions within my own family. I find it difficult compared to the times when I was home. My children don't really like some of the traditions. Sometimes I hear them saying "that's old fashioned, mom!" and find myself responding "it might be, but while I'm alive we are still going to follow some of the family traditions I had as I grew up in my home." Why, because I would say the same thing to my mom. I thought what they did was also very old fashioned and I would always tell her, "I'll never follow these family traditions when I grow up or even have them in my home." Not soon enough would I be biting my tongue because most of things she did and showed us, I'm doing today. My husband and I even tried raising our family like our parents had done. We always go back and remember the way we did things.

Overall, I remember my mother always saying "Aprendan como hacer las cosas porque un dia se les va a ofrecer." I think she was so right because I long for the good old days and one thing that sticks in my mind is her good old traditional ways of cooking.

Appendix X - Continued

It always seemed so inviting. The memories are there. I can still close my eyes and I can visualize her in the kitchen and all the good times I spend with her after I wedded. It became a mother daughter thing as I saw her aging and needing help. I began to do a lot of cooking and I found myself doing it for my family but I also cooked so I could send my mother a plate or invite her to my home. For example if I saw pumpkins, right away I would say "look mom lets buy some and we will bake empanadas tomorrow and give everyone some." She would immediately say "si, esta bien, yo los preparo a la noche para estar lista en la mañana." Once they were done we would wrap them up in bundles and go and deliver them to my brothers and sisters and this gave her time to pay them a visit. This made her happy, and I loved seeing her in that mood.

Well I'm over the hump in years. I believe I have tried to carry on family traditions especially with my family but I'll tell you this much. I find myself adopting more to American modern traditions. An example, on Thanksgiving as a young teenager we never knew how Thanksgiving was celebrated. Yes, I would watch T.V. and could see how Anglos celebrated it and we'd always say, "well only the rich do that," but lo and behold when my oldest sister became a senior in high school she took homemaking and she began to learn how to cook and bake. At first on Thanksgiving my mom would go out to the chicken pen, catch 2 chickens and get them ready for our Thanksgiving meal. She would ring their neck, boil water, pluck the feathers, gut them out and then she would bake them in the oven, stuffed with potatoes onion and tomato. This was our Thanksgiving meal. Meanwhile my sister approaches my dad one day and asks him if she could have some money because this time she wanted to cook something special for Thanksgiving. He does give her money and off she goes to the groceries. She was going

Appendix X - Continued

to surprise all of us because on that Thanksgiving Day she prepared a turkey with all the trimmings and boy from then this became a new tradition. I now follow this new American tradition in my home. Even for birthdays I will include the turkey meal along with a ham, spanish rice, potato salad, cole slaw, yams, rolls and for dessert carrot cake with fruit salad.

What is tradition? For me it is a custom, a belief. I believe it begins with how we are raised. Hopefully, my children will carry some of my family traditions.

Dolores L. Vega

March 1990
written for a
Counseling class

provision for regional settlement, Soviet Ambassador Nikolai T. Fedorov insisted on a vote on his motion.

ds to Unveil w Weapons

SCOW (UPI) — The Soviet Union on Sunday is expected to unveil a giant intercontinental rocket and two other mis- never previously displayed.

Official sources said today the 10-foot ICBM is likely to be the focal point of a military parade scheduled in Red Square to mark the 20th anniversary of the end of World War II in Eu-

Shal Nikolai Krylov, chief of Soviet rocket forces, said Thursday of "pinpoint ac- curacy" by Russian rockets. The publication mounted that the strategic rocket to be unveiled Sunday may be capable of carrying 1.6 million pounds of war- just — the same force boosted cosmonauts Alex- androv and Pavel Belyayev into orbit.

Dominican Rebels Ask French Aid

PARIS (UPI)—The Dominican rebel government of Col. Francisco Caamano Deno has asked France for "moral and material support" against U.S. military intervention there, government sources said today.

The sources said France is canvassing Latin American nations to see whether they will recognize the Caamano government. Caamano was elected "provisional president" by a rump session of members of the Dominican parliament which was dissolved two years ago.

Officials did not say what answer France planned to give to the Caamano appeal.

President Charles de Gaulle, in an unprecedented step by a Western ally, Thursday publicly denounced the American landings in Santo Domingo and demanded prompt withdrawal of the troops. He said then France was considering whether to recognize the rebel government.

gon, bringing U.S. troop strength in Viet Nam to 41,500.

There were no incidents, but a military spokesman disclosed the Viet Cong launched its largest attack of the year Thursday. A two-pronged assault hit a camp for Roman Catholic refugees in the Mekong Delta south of Saigon and an airbase where U.S. helicopters were refueling nearby.

Casualties Listed

The helicopters armed with rockets and machineguns took

ured 30 others listed as missing.

At the same time, 50 more plane-loads of paratroopers and equipment flew into Bien Hoa and Vung Tau airbases near Saigon. A spokesman said 1,600 landed Thursday. He was not sure how many landed today. The brigade totals 3,500 men.

A U.S. spokesman described the guerrilla assault as the biggest this year. The Viet Cong stormed the camp at Hai Yen 180 miles southwest of Saigon.

Viet Nam, U.S. Navy tackled transportation Thursday night in two missions.

Two Skyhawks jets aircraft carrier Car- strafed a convoy on about 70 miles south. Pilots reported "prob- age to two trucks."

Another Skyhawk and Phantom jets, also Coral Sea, attacked on the Thong Hieu vil- es southwest of a spokesman said one barges was left burn- ing.

Pilots reported no aircraft or anti-aircraft the planes returned sa-

Edinburg Farmer Dies In Car-Truck Crash

Refugio Perez Luna, 54, a prominent Edinburg farmer, became the Valley's 26th traffic fatality of the year when he was killed in a car-truck collision at 2:15 p.m. Thursday. The fatal crash ended a string of deathless days that began April 17.

Luna's car collided with an oil truck driven by Jacinto Olivarez, 44, of McAllen on McColl Road just north of U.S. Highway 83. McAllen police said the

truck had stopped at the inter- section and the Luna car plow- ed into it from the rear.

Damage to the truck was mi- nor, but the car was demolish- ed. The impact knocked the mo- tor out of the car.

Luna, who was alone in the car, did not have seat belts. Oliv- arez was uninjured. Police said no charges would be filed. The truck belonged to A&A Vac- uum service.

Luna was pronounced dead on arrival at the McAllen Muni- cipal Hospital.

Mr. Luna came to the Valley

Record Number

Today's big amphib- ing involved 3,000 Com- Marines and 3,000 Sa- increased the number can servicemen in S- Nam to a record 41,500 ing 18,500 men in an edged combat role.

The other 23,000 are officially listed as ers" to Vietnamese units. A full brigade Army paratroopers la- iler this week in the area.

The Leathernecks ashore on the 11th an of the Communist vic the French at Dienb- battle which ended china War. There w that the Viet Cong wo brate" the Dienbienph- sary with anti-Americ attacks.

South Vietnamese

ATH CAR — Shown above is the car in which Refugio Perez Luna (inset) died Thursday. The car rammed into the back of a mud truck at the McColl ad - U.S. Highway 83 intersection. Luna was dead on arrival at McAllen municipal Hospital. (Monitor Photo)

1965	1964
May 7	
26	36

in 1938 from Mexico and had resided west of Edinburg on Depot Road. He was an active member of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church and was well known throughout the Valley for his farming activities.

Survivors include his wife, Maria G.; six sons, Rafael, Romulo, Refugio Jr., Ramon, Roberto and Rodolfo, Luna; four daughters, Theresa, Juanita, Dolores and Maria Cecilia Luna; his father, Antonio Luna; four brothers, Efrén, Ramon, Antonio Jr. and Alvaro Luna; three sisters, Mrs. Jesus Rosas, of Oakley, Calif. Mrs. Luis Sanchez, McAllen, and Carmen Luna, and 11 grandchildren.

Rosary service will be held at 8 tonight in the Ceballos-Diaz Funeral Home Chapel. Funeral mass will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday in the Sacred Heart Church with burial in Valley memorial Gardens.

Pallbearers will be Ramon Cantu, Jose Luis Guzman, Ramiro Guerra, Max Reyna, Mel- ecio Gonzales, Mike Garza, Santos Saldana and Lalo Ca- vazos.

PICTURE FLASH

'Early Nab Su

MIAMI (UPI) — W- ered accused Canad- burglar Georges Le- most about being in- was that a space sa- him there.

For a while, he did it.

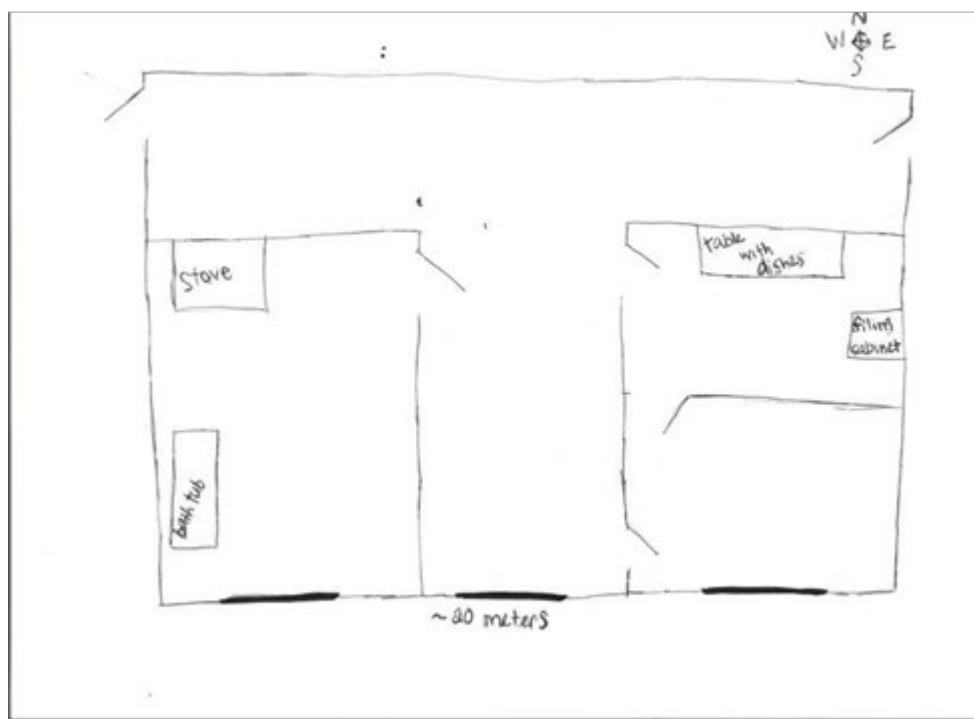
Sought since 1961 in- lion heist, Lemay w- up on his \$25,000 yac- day because an infor- police about seeing "I- wanted" picture on a- program flashed bet- continents via "Earl- the television satellite.

At home Lemay is- with cleaning out som- deposit boxes at the-

The Monitor newspaper article about the death of Refugio Perez Luna

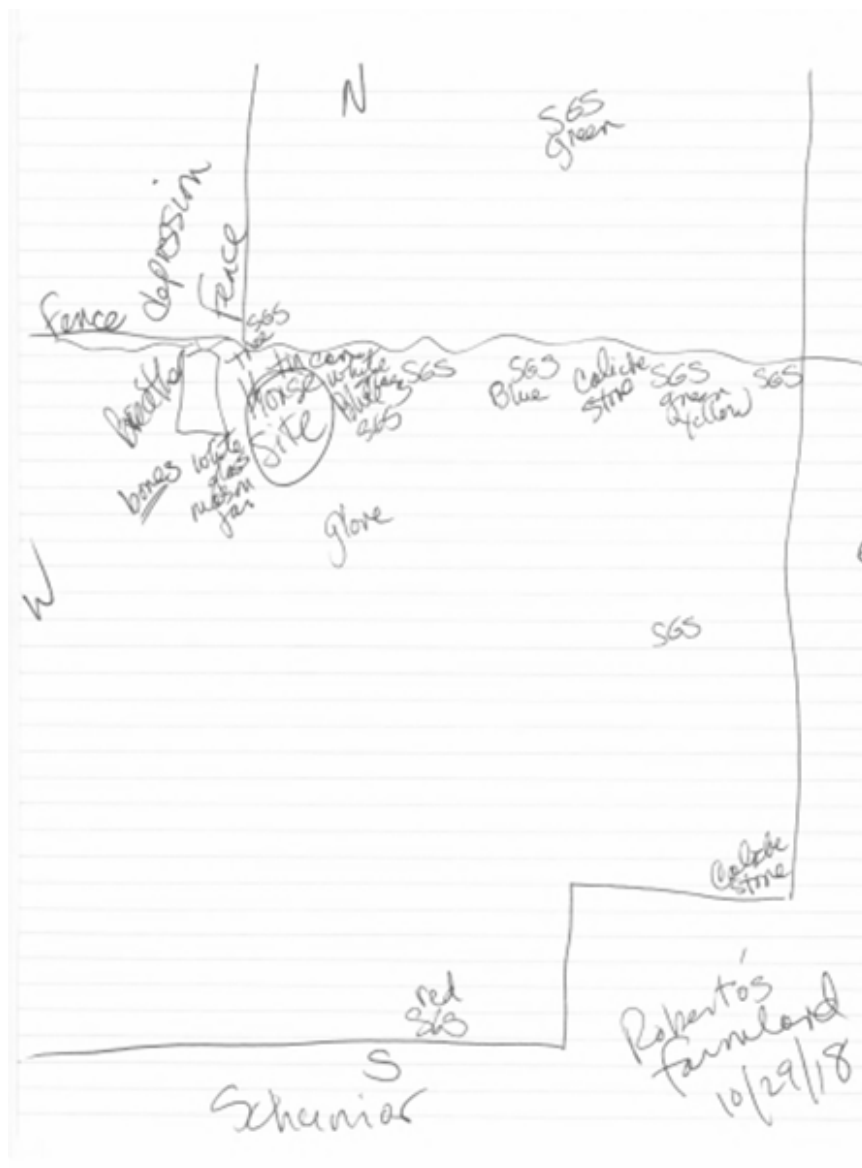
Appendix Z

Hand drawn Braceros' Quarters Map on Roberto Luna's Property

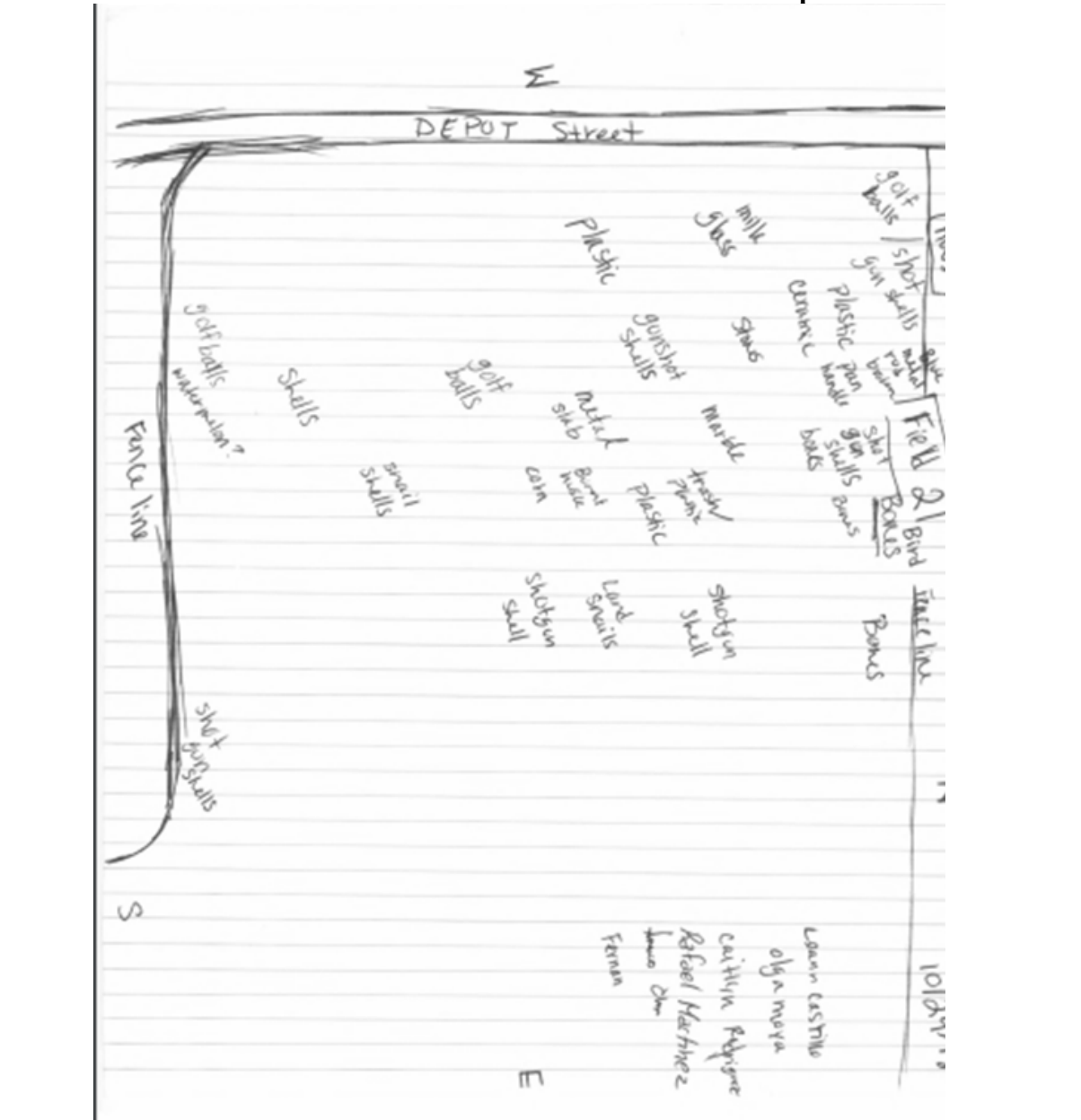


Appendix AA

Roberto Luna Field 1 Material Culture Map

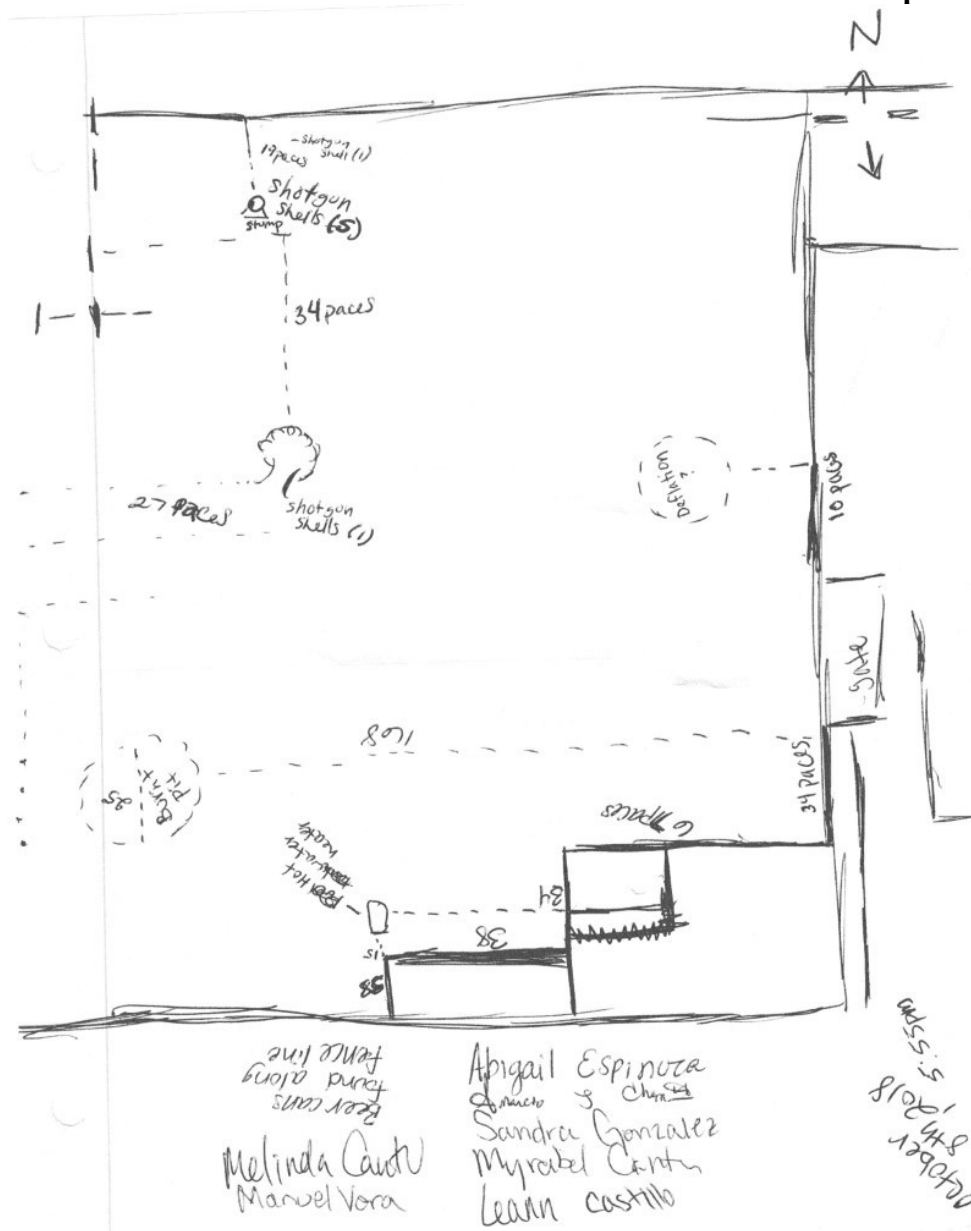


Roberto Luna Field 2 Material Culture Map



Appendix AA Continued

Maria Juanita Luna Navarro Pasture Material Culture Map



Appendix BB

Maria G. Luna

By

Criselda V. Vega

World History

April 5, 1998

Mrs. Kruce

Appendix BB - Continued

Maria G. Luna was a special, loving and courageous women that I love to call my grandmother. She lived a long life but struggled and managed to live through it all. Although she had her good times and bad times, a lot of memories and traditions were left behind with us. This is my story of her...

Maria Garza was hispanic, thin about 5'4", with dark brown, wavy hair. She was born on April 9, 1912 in Reynosa, Mexico. As the fifth child out of six children in the family, (four boys and two girls), she grew up to be very beautiful. At about the age of 10, her parents sent her to fields, picking crops and such other products because they lived very poorly with only a small house with two rooms and a kitchen made outside. There was very little education in Reynosa so Maria learned as much as possible through the teachings of her grandmother. She learned only how to write and read but to Maria that was just enough. Soon then Maria's brothers and sister were off working just as well but in farther parts of Mexico. Problems began to occur when there home was rotting away and money was not in there possession. Maria knew this and had to do something about it, and she did. When she was 14 years old, she realized that she wanted a better life. She wanted money, a farm, children, and most of all a real home that wouldn't begin to rot away as soon as it would start to rain.

Then three months later Maria finally crossed Mexico and over to America as an immigrant, but with only one of her brothers. This of course was not illegal back then because you didn't need papers to cross over. The two of them traveled to a small town called Los Evanos, near La Joya in Texas, where they were told to go by there parents because some of Maria's relatives lived there and were glad to welcome them into there home. Later on Maria and her brother began working in fields when she met a young man named Refugio Luna. They dated and had a lot of things in common just as well, and in 1930 they got married. Although they started off with a one bedroom house, the both of them saved enough money from working

Appendix BB - Continued

out in the fields to buy land that cost one hundred dollars an acre. At that time though the only amount of land they could buy was only 50 acres. They began to invest ~~on~~ planting crops on ~~there~~ own that even went so well that the tomatoes they received made a great deal of money, which ~~made~~ ^{helped} them buy even more land. On this extra land Maria finally got the house of her dreams, with a farm, consisting of chickens, cows, rabbits, horses, and pigs.

In 1933 Maria had her first child and as many years went on she had 9 more. As she raised her children Maria tried her best to keep them well educated and helped them in any way she could. Even though money was becoming difficult to get because the crops were not producing, she managed to keep everything steady and under control. When Maria was 33 she became very sick and started having problems with her eye sight. In 1958 Maria's husband died in a car wreck because of a diabetes attack. She was left a widow with 10 children, she was left with everything and her sons took care of the farming just as there father had taught them. The years passed on and her children soon moved on with there lives, getting married and having children of there own. When Maria was 80 she still had many difficulties with her eye sight, problems of not seeing correctly even with the thickest glasses. She had been tested many times for any disease that could be preventing this problem but there was no answer. Months later she went blind, but yet still managed her house and farm. Two years later on April 9, 1992 Maria died of a mild heart attack in her sleep.

Maria G. Luna I thought was brave because she lived being poor and struggling to become better as well as to raise her children in a safe and good environment. I am glad that I researched her background because now I understand more things about her and respect her even more. What I learned is that through the roughest times you can still make it to the top.

Appendix BB - Continued

Dolores L. Vega

RECEIVED 220 385 3116

Janie Navarro

RECEIVED 220 385 3116

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CHAPS class group photo Dec 10, 2018

Front row left to right: Esther Luna Montemayor, Dolores Luna Vega, Rodolfo Luna, Juanita Luna Navarro, Teresa Luna Medrano
 Second row left to right: Manuel Vera, Karina Ramirez, Ashly De Leon, Lorena Bryan, Malinda Cantu, Olga Moya, Sandra Gonzalez, Dayana Garza Gonzalez
 Third row left to right: Dannel Viveros, Evelyn Cantu, Abigail Espinoza, John Gutierrez, Stephanie Luna, Lynn Rodriguez, Myrabel Cantu, Cullen Turk
 Back row standing left to right: Rafael Martinez, Amancio Chapa, Caitlyn Rodriguez, Leann Castillo, Fernan Rojas, Mark Sifuentes, Edward Gonzalez, and Julio Smith



CHAPS class group photo Dec 10, 2018 with Kelly & Odie Norquest, Dwayne Bair and Luna Family

