



Presents

Multicultural

Festival Weekend

September 3-4, 2021

The People, The Cultures, The Cuisines



Legacy of Love, Family, and Heritage

The Manuel Valdez Jr. Story

An American labor shortage created during WWI sent recruiters of the Rock Island Railroad deep into the heart of Mexico to find hard working young men to do the grueling work of building their railroad tracks. The Valdez brothers answered the call. Before making the move, Manuel Valdez Sr. and Guadalupe Sapien married in 1919 in the city of La Piedad, Michoacan, Mexico. Then Jesus Reyes and her children Juan and newlyweds Manuel Sr. and wife, Guadalupe, left their families and friends far away in Mexico to build a life in West Des Moines, Iowa in America. The Valdez's built a life and raised their families in Valley Junction. Manuel Sr. and his brother, Juan, worked for the Rock Island Railroad as many Mexican immigrants did for nearly 80 years. As employees of the Rock Island Railroad, they lived with their children in the boxcar community known as Hyde Park named after the superintendent of the railroad company. Eventually, Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Valdez Sr. bought a home south of the railroad tracks near Fifth Street in Valley Junction. Later they bought a home at 116 12th Street where they raised 13 children. Manuel J. Valdez, Jr. was born on June 9, 1928, the first born son to Guadalupe and Manuel Valdez, Sr.



The Valdez children had a full and happy childhood. They always played outside on the southside of the railroad tracks and enjoyed swimming in the river with siblings and friends. Thirteen children were great playmates and shared everything. In their modest home the children slept in two beds, one for the girls and a bed for the boys. The Valdez's were rich in family and love and focused on all they had, each other. The older sisters would care for the younger children. And Manuel Sr. was always singing and smiling; a characteristic his first born look-alike adopted.

Growing up in the Junction afforded the opportunity to make many friends. The uniqueness of the Valley Junction community was that race did not determine relationships. Manuel Jr. often relived the story of walking with friends and happening to come upon an apple orchard. They would stop and "barrow" some apples, he fondly recalls. Manuel was proud of his roots in Mexico and Valley Junction.



Valley Quarterback Manuel Valdez feeds ball to brother John Valdez, halfback.

Manuel often described a childhood filled with family, sports, and music. At Valley High School, he excelled in football as quarterback (right: passing the ball to brother John), basketball, and track receiving many accolades for his performance. There was no baseball in high school so after graduation Manuel, brothers, and

close friends created a team. The West Des Moines Mexican Eagles fast-pitch softball team (left: Manuel is top row far right) was the team to beat! Manuel Jr. was a proud member and played first baseman. Brother Jess Valdez was the fastest pitcher in the area. The Eagles played at Birdland Park in Des Moines. They traveled for tournaments as far as Omaha, NE which was a major accomplishment then!



Although they may have been friends as young children playing in the neighborhood, it is guessed that Manuel met the love of his life at Valley High School. In 1948 Manuel Jr. graduated from high school (left) and two years later he married Helen Salgado (right). Shortly after Manuel Jr. answered the call to serve his country during the Korean War. He enlisted in the army for 2 years. He didn't see any combat as he was stationed in Whitehorse, Alaska. The unit served as a road survey crew. They would test out large new equipment. After two years, he returned home. The birth of his son, Tony, kept him home to care for his newly growing family. The new parents moved to 3rd Street and Railroad in 1955 until 1966. Later they moved to 13th Street and Vine in West Des Moines as their forever home.



Manuel took the wartime skills he learned operating heavy duty machinery and utilized them throughout his career at Marquette/Monarch Cement Plant. He loved his job. Work friends were like family. The co-workers would play pranks, tease, and eat lunch together. John Long was a best friend at the plant and in the community. Many lifelong friendships were developed there.



Sports were important, but music played a valuable role in Manuel Jr.'s life too. His love of music and first guitar were gifts from his father. Manuel Sr. loved to sing and play the guitar. The legacy of singing to his children, which later multiplied with births of his daughters Vicky and Julie, was kept alive in Manuel Jr. He loved filling the house with all kinds of music and adored his albums. It was not unusual to hear the spinning vinyl of big bands, Mexican music, and even country music filling the house. In the early days, he created and played in a band called The Manuel Valdez Orchestra. Manuel played with family and friends in several bands where they spent many years entertaining at United Rubber Workers Hall, Vittoria Lodge, churches, weddings, dances, and family events for those in the Mexican community looking for, as he called it, "good music you can DANCE to". Local Italian and Mexican dances brought a crowd with the MVO rocking the stage. Manuel Jr. was popular in the Des Moines Mexican music community and had his band included his brother Darrell on trumpet and later his son Tony and nephew Vincent.



With music came singing and dancing. Manuel Jr. loved to dance! A lively cha-cha swept Manuel and Helen around the room and out on the town. You couldn't keep them off the dance floor of the Val Air Ballroom. He kept dancing right into his 90's. Growing up, all of his kid's friends loved to watch them dancing. Mr. and Mr. Valdez would go out

dancing and last longer than the young kids and stay out later too. Dance was so important as a family past-time that it became a playful criteria for a good son-in-law. Criteria showed up in suitor conversations. Can he dance and is he a Hawkeye fan were at the top of the list of questions.

Love of music is truly a family trait. Creating music was passed down to the Valdez children. Vicky learned to play guitar while Julie played the flute in elementary school. It seemed though that Tony got the lion's share of the musical talent. A lot of the music his dad, Manuel Jr., loved influenced the type of music played in the Tony Valdez Large Band. Initially the band member dads were supportive in booking the gigs. Tony's musical skills began to truly shine his Freshman year at Dowling, and soon Manuel Jr. was driving boys and instruments all over as the manager of the Echos V. From the first notes coming from the basement of the Valdez home to the 3 groups Tony plays with today, Manuel Jr. and his brother in-law Sal Salgado could be found most of the time, front and center, whenever Tony was playing. He always had a song in his heart and could be heard humming or singing wherever he went.

Yes, music was important, but we would be remiss to think Manuel Jr.'s love of sports ended in high school. He was an avid and loyal sports fan and had favorite teams in many sports to include the Iowa Hawkeyes, the Chicago Cubs, Chicago Bears and in his later years the Dallas Cowboys. He also loved any team his children or grandchildren were part of and coached baseball and softball for many years.



When asked 'what is Mr. Manuel Valdez Jr.'s legacy', his children agree it is love, love of family and community. He loved his family and was surrounded all through his life with much reciprocated love and support from all those who knew him. Manuel was truly committed to his family, worked hard to provide for them, and was very devoted to wife. The Valdez children wanted for nothing as Manuel Jr. supported his children in school, played with them, and coached them. All three children attended Sacred Heart and Dowling High School. His daughters believe he was ahead of his time in caring for his family.

In an era of strong gender family roles, Manuel Jr. was a renaissance family man. He would come home from work before his wife and cook dinner, so it was ready for her when she arrived home from work. He dusted and vacuumed as well as mowed the lawn, Handyman at

heart, he thought he could fix everything (even if he couldn't). Manuel Jr. was the "Uncle" that everyone wanted for their own. He was a devoted family man who always had a story to share about his kids, grandkids, nieces, and nephews, and was especially thrilled to learn a great-grandchild is expected in November.



The Valdez family didn't have much, but he gave all he had. Even as Helen's health waned in 2004, he took care of his lovely wife for several years until he couldn't care for her himself anymore. Helen Valdez passed in 2010 with her husband's love as tender as it was in its conception sixty years prior. They exemplified what a beautiful marriage should be. Their faith kept them in the tough times and bolstered them in good times. Yes, beyond music, another legacy left for the Valdez children is how to be a good partner and good parents. Today the kids are close because of him. They still hang-out together and live in the same city.

Manuel Jr. was proud of his Mexican American heritage. This manifested in music and faith as previously mentioned, as well as hard work, family, and food. He earned and passed on the Mexican hard work ethic. "We had to work harder and do better. Nothing is given to you," you could often hear him imparting wisdom through encouragement. "Your family are your friends," was constantly reinforced. He was very protective due to some of the prejudice he faced. So, he ensured that family was considered friends too. Even still, Manuel Jr. made friends and family with all people. Manuel Jr. knew everyone. He was known for caring for neighbors' yards and in later years being a neighborhood handyman. In his later years, he sat on the porch and the neighbor ladies would bring him food to thank him for his care. Manuel Jr. felt good about his neighborhood and cared for it.



Finally, the Mexican legacy was also consumable. The cooking of Mexican food became a true labor of love for his daughters. Helen was an excellent cook, and it was hard for her daughters to live up to her culinary skills. After her passing, Manuel Jr. became his daughter's food critic. They would work hard to make the perfect Mexican sopa, but he always had some adjustments to make. His favorites were enchiladas with spice and sopa, Mexican rice. So many batches of Mexican rice went "out the window" until they got it right according to Manuel's taste.

Manuel J. Valdez, Jr, passed away Thursday, June 3, 2021, just 6 days before his 93rd birthday. He died peacefully in his sleep at the home of his daughter and son-in-law, Julie, and Kelly McCarty, where he had stayed this past year during the pandemic, yet his heart and his roots never left Valley Junction. We hope you can join us to celebrate Manuel's life. Valdez children: Tony (Eileen) Valdez, Vicki (Tom) Hallman, Julie (Kelly) McCarty, Valdez Grandchildren: Heidi Valdez (Larry), Aaron Valdez (Deanna), Nick (Kate)Hallman, Cal McCarty & Corey McCarty.

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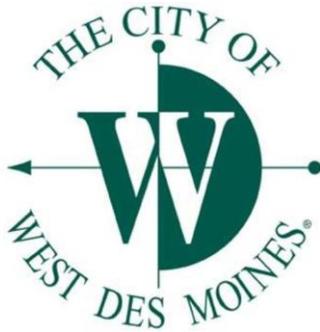
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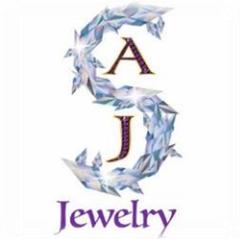
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**Renee Hardman &
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Head, Heart, and Feet.



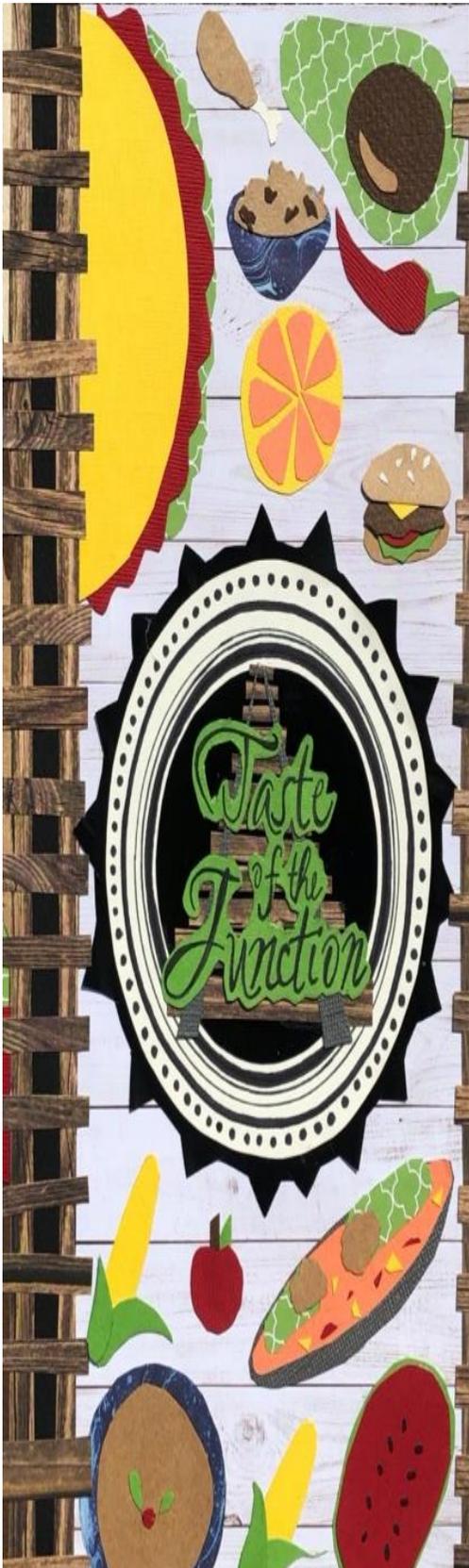
JR Art By Julia



Shae Rene's
Emporium



The Cuisines



Grandpa's Waffles

The
**N
O
R
A**



Strawberries! Smothered in syrupy strawberries & topped with whipped cream that's handmade by us everyday!



Karam's Grill



Hot Peppers Mexican Grill

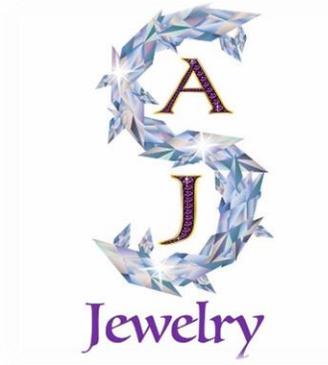


Chellie's Sugar Shack Bakery

Featuring Mari's Minis



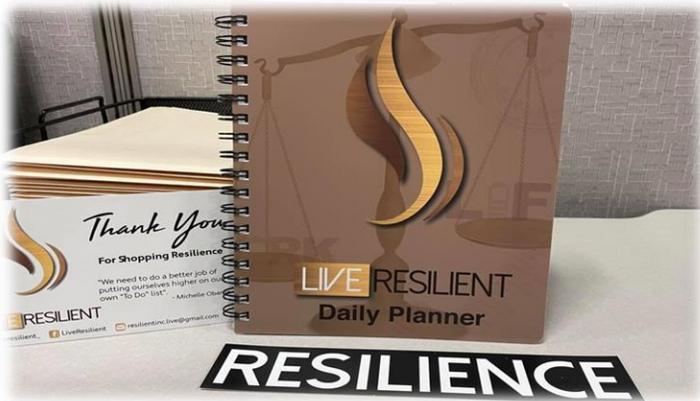
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Strategies 2 Succeed

The Tony Valdez Large Band



"The Tony Valdez Large Band is one of the best parties in Des Moines! With a wonderful mix of Latin, rock, funk, and more, there is something for everyone."

For Bookings Contact

Tony Valdez (515) 979-2301

Dwight Jackson & Fernando Aveiga



For Bookings Contact



Sumpin Doo



Taste of the Junction Multicultural Festival Inaugural Band

(2013)

For Bookings Contact:

Gil Davis (515) 371-5752 or Jim Parker (515) 344-5665

The Junction Speaks Host Sponsor



4444 Fuller Rd

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The Junction Speaks



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Taste of the Junction VITA Volunteers



Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program



Thank You

2021

*Multicultural Festival
Dedicated to the
Memory of*

*Matriarchs & Patriarchs of the
Junction*

Mrs. Barbara Jean Long

Mr. Manuel Valdez

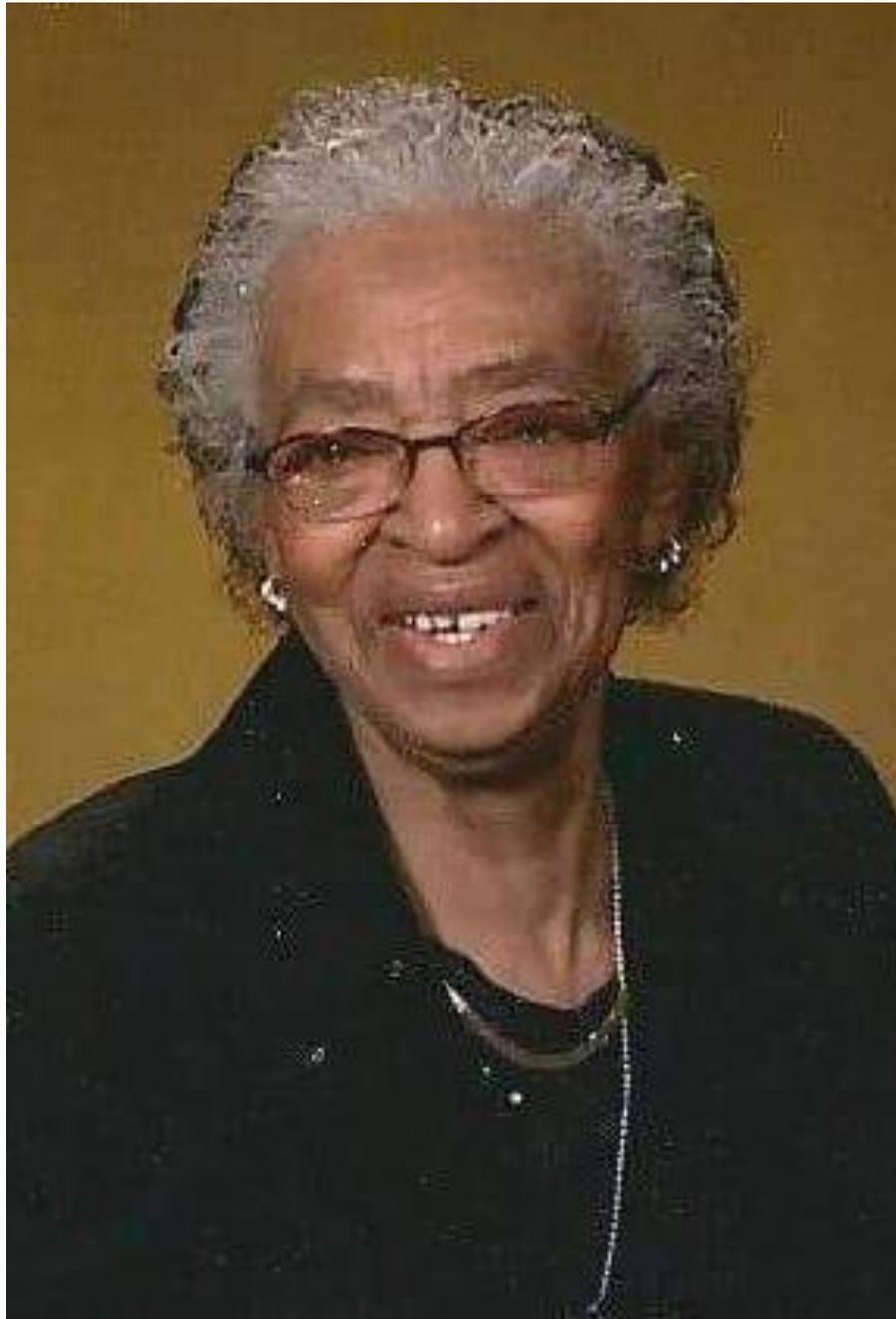
Mrs. Marjorie Ault Septer Hargens

Mrs. Viggie Rocha Fry

Mrs. Dorothy Pryor



*A Special Presentation to
Mr. Frank Duncan*



Barbara Jean (Page) Long
Matriarch

1931-2021

Community Activist

Daughter Sister Wife Mother Aunt Grandma
Friend

Know affectionately in the community to anyone as Mom
& Grandma



Mr. Manuel Valdez

Patriarch

1928-2021

*Member Mexican Eagles Softball Team
Son Brother Husband Father Uncle
Grandfather Friend*

“He was the “Uncle” that everyone wanted for their own”



Marjorie Ann (Ault) Septer Hargens
Matriarch

"Queen of Christmas"

1924-2020

Daughter Sister Wife Mother Aunt Grandmother
Friend

*"She was the "Queen of Christmas" and the original
"Martha Stewart", only better, because it was personalized
and created with love."*



Mrs. Viggie (Munoz) Rocha Fry
Matriarch

1928-2020

*Volunteered at Hospice, Sacred Heart Catholic Church and
anywhere she could lend a helping hand*

*Daughter Sister Wife Mother Aunt Grandmother
Friend*

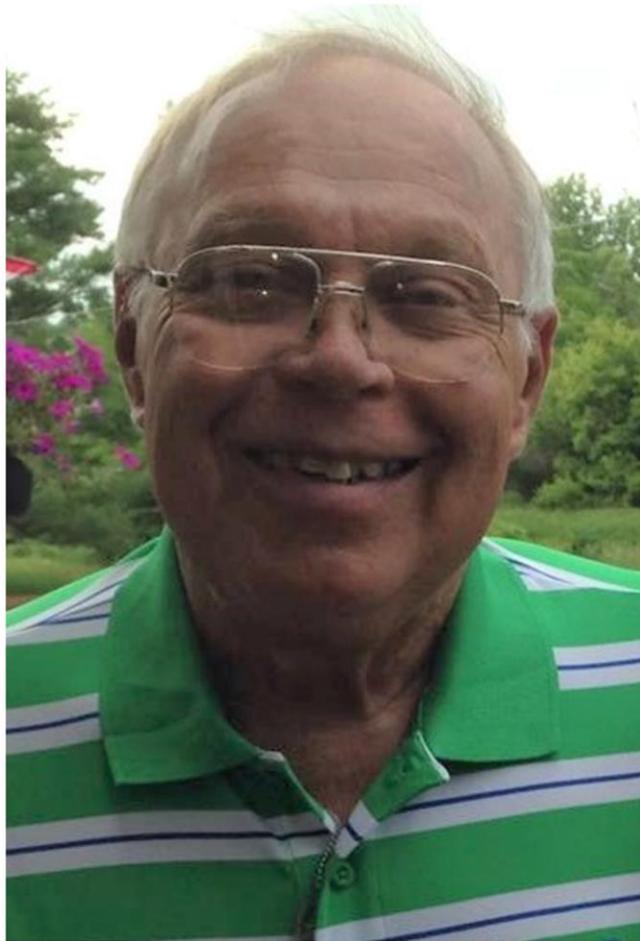


Dorothy (Trumbo) Garrett Pryor
Matriarch

1923-2019

Historian, Education Advocate, Community Activist
West Des Moines Citizen of the Year -1991

Daughter Sister Wife Mother Aunt Grandmother



*Mr. Frank Duncan
Patriarch*

*Thank you for your dedication,
commitment, and leadership
to Valley Junction and the
City of West Des Moines.*

Presented on this day September 4, 2021



CELEBRATING THE PEOPLE, CULTURES AND CUISINES IN OUR COMMUNITY



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FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 3RD

5PM-8PM



STORYTELLING, SLIDESHOWS, PRESENTATIONS POP UP HISTORY MUSEUM



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*10 Year
Anniversary!*

*The People, The Cultures, The Cuisines
Aaaah Taste of the Junction!*