

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1999-2001

E^{*lgin*}
H^{*ispanic*}
N^{*etwork*}

Prepared by Gilbert Feliciano, President 1999-2001

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Elgin Hispanic Network has seen tremendous growth and stability in the last two years. Its membership base has grown, the level of member commitment has increased and knowledge of its existence in the community has been expanded significantly. The Network's professional image as well as its community image has seen a tremendous leap. Lastly, the last two years have seen Network members commit to its growth and stability in ways not seen since its earliest years.

Description

The Elgin Hispanic Network meets monthly for lunch to carry out its mission. The first thirty minutes of the meeting are designed to foster the type of informal networking one finds and utilizes in front yards, lobbies, backyard barbeques, foyers, etc. The subsequent hour is designed to administer the charges dictated in our bylaws (approve minutes, reports, etc.). Procedural obligations aside, the real benefit of the Network is in the self-introductions and announcements. It is here where each member learns what the other is doing or will be doing. Helpful materials are usually passed out for further dissemination. Of course, the quintessential advantage of being a Network member is the ability to network with leaders in the local Latino Community. Community-based organization, businesses, and government agencies are all part of the Network. It is for anyone that comes into contact with the Latino community.

Historical Background

The Network began in 1987 by a group of individuals interested in taking the current Health and Welfare Luncheon model and applying it specifically to the Latino community. Its mission and goals have substantially stayed the same. The greatest and most profound change occurred in 1998 wherein the bylaws were changed to encourage non-bilingual/bicultural members. The great need for the Elgin Hispanic Network is evidenced by recent Census 2000 figures. Elgin's Latino population stands at %30 and Kane County's Hispanic population stands at 24%. Any local organization seriously interested in reaching out to this quickly growing segment of our population, will want to be part of the Network.



September 26, 2001

To All Elgin Hispanic Network Members:

Two years ago I become your president and today is my final day at the helm of this wonderful organization. I remember feeling overwhelmed at the thought of leading an organization that has been around many years and full of so many talented and gifted individuals. Now, two years later, I have an even greater appreciation for the gifts and talents of the Network's wonderful members. You have made this organization a pleasure to lead. Albeit, not everything was without its challenges, but therein lays my renewed appreciation for Network members: your resolve . . . your creativity . . . your commitment . . . and your dedication. You are what makes us a "network." Not in a cold, technological sense wherein miles of cable and indifferent commands exist, but a network of high quality human beings.

I want to thank each and every one of you that helped us achieve the great strides we have accomplished in these last 24 months. I especially want to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of our Executive Committee (Officers and Committee Chairs). Unlike the general members, they have two meetings to go to a month if not more!

Although we lost our initial Treasurer, we gained an invaluable member, Kim Cecil, who has managed, in a short time, to create some of the best financial reports this organization has ever had. Our Vice-President, Angie Negron, helped me tremendously when I have been unable to fulfill my obligations to the Network. Unfortunately, our Correspondence Secretary, Julio Cesar Valdez, was unable to fulfill his obligations. This was due to his obligations as an attorney and thus noon meetings were almost always out of the question. Fortunately, the rest of you stepped up. Lastly, our Recording Secretary, Andrea Fiebig, has been doing this for many years and although we never quite got the "Internet Thing" worked out, we have a record of our activities that is complete and accurate. On behalf of our 50+ members, I want to thank you for your unswerving dedication of service to us.

Sincerely,

Gil Feliciano

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MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, information and resources in order to improve the quality of life for the Hispanic community and thus, the communities of the greater Elgin area.



Looking Back

The following is a brief listing of some of the accomplishments and milestones from 1999 to 2001.

- ▶ **1 November 1999:** the Elgin Hispanic Network took the lead in organizing a public forum with City of Elgin officials in order to address some of the concerns the Latino community had with respect to housing overcrowding. A committee made up of Latinos and African-Americans was created from this forum and used to further address the concerns of Elgin's minority community with respect to the overcrowding issue in Elgin.
- ▶ **6 November 1999:** the Elgin Hispanic Network was contacted by a reporter from the Washington Post for a response to the overcrowding issue in Elgin. Several members, as well as the President, met with the reporter for comment.
- ▶ **24 November 1999:** Elliot's Banquets was the location for our first shot at the annual Thanksgiving Luncheon. The High School scholarship recipient was Blanca Luna. The adult scholarship recipient was Armando Trejo. Organization of the Year winner was Centro de Informacion and Member of the Year Winner was Jenny S. Diaz deLeon. Invocation was done by the Rev. Darren Sloniger of West Ridge Community Church.
- ▶ **December 1999:** we participated, for the first time ever, in the annual Winter Window Wonderland sponsored by the Downtown Neighborhood Association. Our motivation was to become more involved in our community. Our window (Promac-south) was photographed and printed in the local paper as it was being decorated.
- ▶ **23 February 2000:** we hosted a Census Workshop administered by the local office wherein members were introduced to the long and short forms as well as an extensive Q&A session. Elgin Police Department provided their Training Room.

- ▶ **14 March 2000: we became official participants in the Adopt-A-Highway Program. Our highway is located on Route 31 from I-90 to Airport Rd./Tollgate Rd. We have had several cleanups and fulfilled our minimal obligations of 4 cleanups a year.**
- ▶ **8 April 2000: we conducted our first-ever Strategic Planning Retreat at the Community Crisis Center. Our facilitator was Karen Fox of School District U-46. It resulted in some general recommendations and a clearly articulated mission**
- ▶ **12 May 2000: the Network was highlighted on WRMN/1410 AM in their weekly focus on local organizations. 45 minutes were devoted to Q&A by the host and call-in questions from the community.**
- ▶ **19 July 2000: the Network played host it's "parent" organization – the Health & Welfare Luncheon. It was a capacity crowd with many people asking questions. Several members were gained as a result.**
- ▶ **25 October 2000: approved our first-ever annual budget.**
- ▶ **15 November 2000: the Elgin Hispanic Networked hosted the biggest Thanksgiving Luncheon in its history. It was a standing room only event with many area decision-makers and policy-setters attending. Our featured speaker was the Hon. Manuel Barbosa. High School scholarship recipients were Lydia Feliciano and Silvas Rivas. Organization of the Year award went to the Community Crisis Center and the City of Elgin (tie). Member of the Year award went to Gil Feliciano. Invocation was done by the Rev. Margaret Alarcon of Templo Calvario.**
- ▶ **December 2000: For our second year in a row, we participated in the Downtown Neighborhood Association's Winter Window Wonderland. We decorated a window directly north of the Crocker Theater.**
- ▶ **April 2001: we initiated our first-ever member Scholarship Fund Drive. The Scholarship fund increased by a little over \$300.00.**
- ▶ **July 2001: Scholarship funds were secured to fully fund our two \$500 2001 scholarships – sponsored by Elgin State Bank. Thank you Mary!**
- ▶ **September 2001: the Network was interviewed by a reporter from the Wall Street Journal seeking comments on the state of Latino home ownership in the area.**

Our Gracious Hosts

Several times a year, we have a "Host" meeting wherein a member organization is given the opportunity to "host" a meeting. They are given 20 minutes to share what they do, visit their location, provide lunch, and offer a Q&A. They were:

- ▶ **Community Crisis Center**
- ▶ **Elgin Community Network (f.k.a. Neighborhood Council)**
- ▶ **Fox Valley Hospice**

- ▶ **Elgin Community College**
- ▶ **Community Mediation Center**
- ▶ **Resident Officer Program of Elgin/Safe Summer Program**
- ▶ **Department of Children and Family Services**
- ▶ **Elgin State Bank**

Committees

Membership

- ▶ **Chair: Rachel Hernandez**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: To qualify applicants for membership and introduce new members to the membership.**
- ▶ **Comments: Rachel not only made the directory updates more efficient, she raised the bar in her committee. She hustled new members and almost forced us to create a new tag-line: “EHN: We’re Always . . . With An Application”!**

Social/Culture

- ▶ **Chair: Rae Bramel**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: Its purpose is to organize and plan all social functions and group events.**
- ▶ **Comments: It took someone like Rae, dedicated and tenacious, to put together the best attended Thanksgiving Luncheon in our history. Hats off to Rae for all her hard work in 2 Thanksgiving Luncheons, 2 Christmas pot lucks, and 2 July Picnics.**

Executive

- ▶ **Chair: N/A**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: Its purpose is to assist the President on major issues/decisions concerning current or upcoming events. The committee will consist of all current officers and committee chairs. This committee will be chaired by the President.**
- ▶ **Comments: The Executive Committee met with regularity and strong participation the first year and a half, but waned substantially the last several months of their term. Meetings, however, were made more efficient as its length was cut by 15 to 30 minutes.**

Awards

- ▶ **Chair: Liliana Varas.**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: Its purpose is to qualify and select a member award and an institutional/company award to be presented at the annual Thanksgiving luncheon. Also to qualify and select recipients to receive annual scholarships.**
- ▶ **Comments: Liliana was almost driven to drink by your obsessive-compulsive president! Thank goodness she has resolve unmatched by any other person in the**

county. Two very happy Latino high school students continue to thank Liliana for all her hard work in ensuring they have a shot at a great education.

Finance

- ▶ **Chair: Mary Ellen Walsh**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: The committee works with the Treasurer in preparing financial reports. This committee will plan and implement fund-raises to benefit the scholarship fund and other functions that the organization may deem necessary.**
- ▶ **Comments: Lastly, Mary Ellen Walsh, our Finance Committee Chair, created EHN history by giving us our very first-ever budget! Thank you Mary Ellen for not only your hard work but for your consistent responses to my usual deluge of e-mails.**

Adopt-A-Highway, *ad hoc* - 3/01 to present

- ▶ **Chairs: Rae Bramel/Gil Feliciano**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: Our highway is located on Route 31 from I-90 to Airport Rd./Tollgate Rd. We our minimal obligation is four cleanups a year.**
- ▶ **Comments: Our involvement with the Adopt-A-Highway program was motivated by our desire to become more involved in the community. Since our involvement, we have had three clean-ups. It is anticipated we will meet our minimum in 2002, 2003 and 2004.**

Strategic Planning Retreat, *ad hoc* - 01/00 to 04/08/00

- ▶ **Chair: Gil Feliciano**
- ▶ **Responsibilities: to plan and implement a Strategic Planning Retreat for the Network in order to set a general direction and secure a clearly articulated mission statement**
- ▶ **Comments: Eight members participated in this first-ever event. Karen Fox (U-46) was the facilitator and helped us focus and articulate a mission. It resulted in following recommendations: 1. Select and agree upon a mission statement. This was done and the result is our present mission statement. 2. Focus on the monthly meetings. This has been done with more emphasis given to networking and minimizing administrative items. 3. Get help. This recommendation has not been realized as of this date.**

Membership

EHN had 39 members in September 1999. To date, it has 49. The following is a list of our current members:

**Maricela Alvarez
Elgin Police Dept.**

Jo Ann Armenta

**Jane Barbosa
Elgin Community College**

**Laura Barth
El Conquistador**

**Joseph Becerra
IL Dept. Child & Family
Services**

**Elaine Belanger
Y.W.C.A.**

**Rae Bramel
Community Crisis Center**

**Virginia Breedlove
The Mill - Burnham Mgt. Co.**

**Jerry Campanga
Reflejos**

**Kim Cecil
Family Service Association**

**James Cohen
Elgin Community College**

**Betty Cooke
The Mill Apts**

**Janie Dominguez
The Mill Apts.**

**John Eastman
Boy Scouts, Three Fire Council**

**Gilbert Feliciano
City of Elgin**

**Andrea Fiebig
YWCA**

**Juan Figueroa
Amcore Bank**

**Laura Galindo
Camp Tu-Endie-Wei**

**Sylvia Garcia
Jayne Shover Easter Seals**

**Sonny Garza
Roth Pharmacy**

**Rachel Hernandez
Community Crisis Center**

**Jane Kimball
United Way of Elgin**

**Alicia Martinez
Catholic Social Services**

**Rojelio Medina
Fox River Valley Center for
Independent Living**

**Jeanette Mihalic
Elgin Area Chamber of
Commerce**

**Billie Mintjal
Asta Care Center**

**Marius Mokwe
Physician**

**Matilde Moore
Social Security Administration**

**Lisa Moreno
Neighborhood Housing Services
of Elgin**

**Ruth Munson
Everyware Inc.**

**Angie Negrón
Girl Scouts-Sybaquay Council**

**Andi Nelson
Community Crisis Center**

**Betsy O'Connell
Gail Borden Public Library**

**Scott Olenick
Fox Valley Hospice**

Ximena Ortiz

**Evelyn Pagan
Sherman Hospital**

**Jacky Perales
Farmer's Insurance**

**Maria Pica
Fox Valley Opthamology**

**Martha Pleasant
Cardunal Savings Bank**

**Lalo Ponce
School District U-46**

**Audrey Reed
Centro de Informacion**

**Simona Rhodes
Burnham Mgt. Co./AMO**

**Angel Rosenthal
Neighborhood Housing Services
of Elgin**

**Elsa Salazar
Provena Saint Joseph Hospital**

**Sylvia Soto
Neighborhood Housing Services
of Elgin**

**Liliana Varas
Gail Borden Public Library**

**Mary Villareal
Elgin State Bank**

**Mary Walsh
Fox Valley Hospice**

**Blanca Winton
Hand In Hand Ministries**