

# PORTLAND OBSERVADOR

## Farmworkers picket NORPAC



Demanding the same rights and respect that other workers enjoy, farmworkers and their supporters gathered Tuesday, December 10, in Salem to speak out against repressive labor practices by Willamette Valley growers, picketing outside the NORPAC annual meeting.

The demonstrators braved a cold, heavy rain to call attention to NORPAC's steadfast refusal to negotiate wages and working conditions with their farm workers.

The protest was led by Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), Oregon's union of farmworkers.

NORPAC, a group of 250 growers who own several canneries as well as an international marketing and distribution system, is the largest food processing company west of the Mississippi River.

Among the demonstrators were several members of the Oregon Farm Worker Ministry. Religious supporters have lately played a key role in the Oregon farmworker struggle. Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO), representing 2,000 churches and 17 denominations throughout Oregon, voted November 13 to endorse PCUN's national consumer

boycott of NORPAC products sold under the labels "Flav-R-Pac" (frozen fruits, vegetables and juices) and "Santiam" (canned fruits and vegetables).

Members of two Methodist congregations assisted workers protesting low wages, lack of job security and retaliation for engaging in unionizing activities.

EMO has repeatedly called on NORPAC to respect farmworkers' right to vote on whether they want union representation, a right that workers have in NORPAC canneries. NORPAC has ignored these requests and also refused to agree to a policy of non-retaliation against workers who openly organize on their farms.

In the summer, many workers will begin harvesting fields at 7 a.m., work all day, take a shower and work the swing shift at a NORPAC cannery.

The NORPAC boycott has been in effect since 1992 and has received the official endorsement of more than 50 local, regional and national organizations, including the United Farm Workers of America, the Portland Observador, the National Synod of the United Church of Christ, Oregon Public

Employees' Union and Council #75 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. PCUN is also working to get companies to respect the NORPAC boycott. Currently, Wholesome & Hearty Foods, maker of "Gardenburger" and a company that promotes itself as socially responsible, is being boycotted because of its distribution contract with NORPAC's business group.

An important concern for workers, along with wage and hour issues, is pesticide exposure. "In the strawberries, there's a white powder that when we're picking it gets in my eyes and makes rashes on my hands", said Hermilio Herrera, 32, of Molalla, one of the workers at the protest. Strawberries are one of the crops with the heaviest use of pesticides.

Between the boycott and field organizing pressure, and the experience at Five Oaks Farms, growers are now "thinking the unthinkable." "It's no longer a matter of 'if' unionization will occur in Oregon agriculture", a prominent grower recently told a religious delegation. "It's a matter of 'when'."

## The Last Angry Brown Hat

**A Chicano Play by Alfredo Ramos will be performed one time only, December 27, 1996 at 7:30 p.m. at Monroe High School**

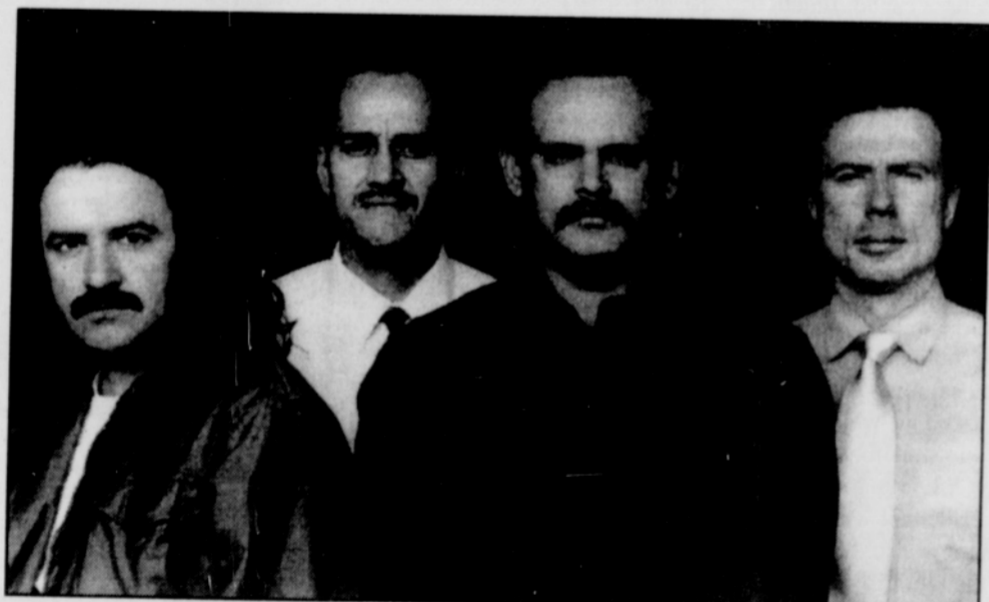
The renowned and widely received Chicano play "The Last Angry Brown Hat" is being brought to Portland by the Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement (OCHA) with assistance from U.S. Bank, Ornelas Enterprises, Portland public Schools and Praegitzer Industries, Inc. for one show only! The performance will be held on Friday, December 27, at Monroe High School, 2508 NE Everett in Portland. The show begins at 7:30 pm. A discussion panel with the actors will take place from 9:00-9:30 pm, followed by coffee and dessert. Tickets are available at Fred Meyer Fastixx outlets or at OCHA at 917 SW Oak, Suite 312, Portland. The actors will also be leading a theater workshop for Latino high school students, 10:00 am-12:30 pm. Preregistration is required. Call OCHS, 228-4131. The workshop is free.

The Last Angry Brown Hat features Enrique Castillo, Danny de La Paz, Danny Haro, and Del Zamora, all seasoned actors who have starred in such films as Mi Familia, American Me, Born in East L.A. and Stand and Deliver. The play is written by Alfredo Ramos and traces the twenty-year friendship of four Chicanos who have come together after the funeral of a friend.

Coming to terms with the past, present and future, the personal and the political, the four men courageously confront their demons in an intimate, vulnerable, and profound way. The play draws on the past experiences of these men to open a window into the issues faced by Latinos in America today. Ramos frequently uses "Spanglish", allowing the characters to choose the best words from each language to present a mosaic of humor and emotion.

Since 1983, OCHA has been committed to providing leadership and support for educational opportunity, economic development and social justice for Hispanics in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Enrique Castillo (Willie)--Stars as Montana in Taylor Hackford's Blood in Blood Out and Memo in Gregory Nava's My Fam-



ily. Castillo starred as Henry Reyna in Luis Valdez Zoot Suit and is a founding member of the Latino Theatre Company (LTC). Other feature film credits include Oliver Stone's Nixon, Borderline with Charles Bronson, Gregory Nava's El Norte and La Carpa directed by Carlos Avila for PBS American Playhouse. LTC productions include August 29, La Victima, Stone Wedding and Roosters.

Danny de la Paz (Louie)--Since has signature performance as Chuco, in the Warner Bros. feature Boulevard Nights, Danny has gone on to co-star with Sean Connery in Cuba, Gary Busey and Gilbert Roland in Barbarosa and with Robert Beltran in Gaby. Other film credits include Seguin, Miracle Mile and La Carpa. Recently he co-starred as Puppet in American Me, directed by Edward James Olmos. Danny is a veteran of numerous stage productions, most recently La Victima produced by the Latino Theatre Company at Plaza de la Raza.

Danny Haro (Jojo)--Danny is virtually "a man for all seasons", having been a college athlete, fire department paramedic, Washington lobbyist, public defender practicing Civil Rights and Criminal Law and currently, "thespian". He made his theatrical debut with El Teatro Campesino in Rose of the Rancho. Other plays include Steinbeck's classic of

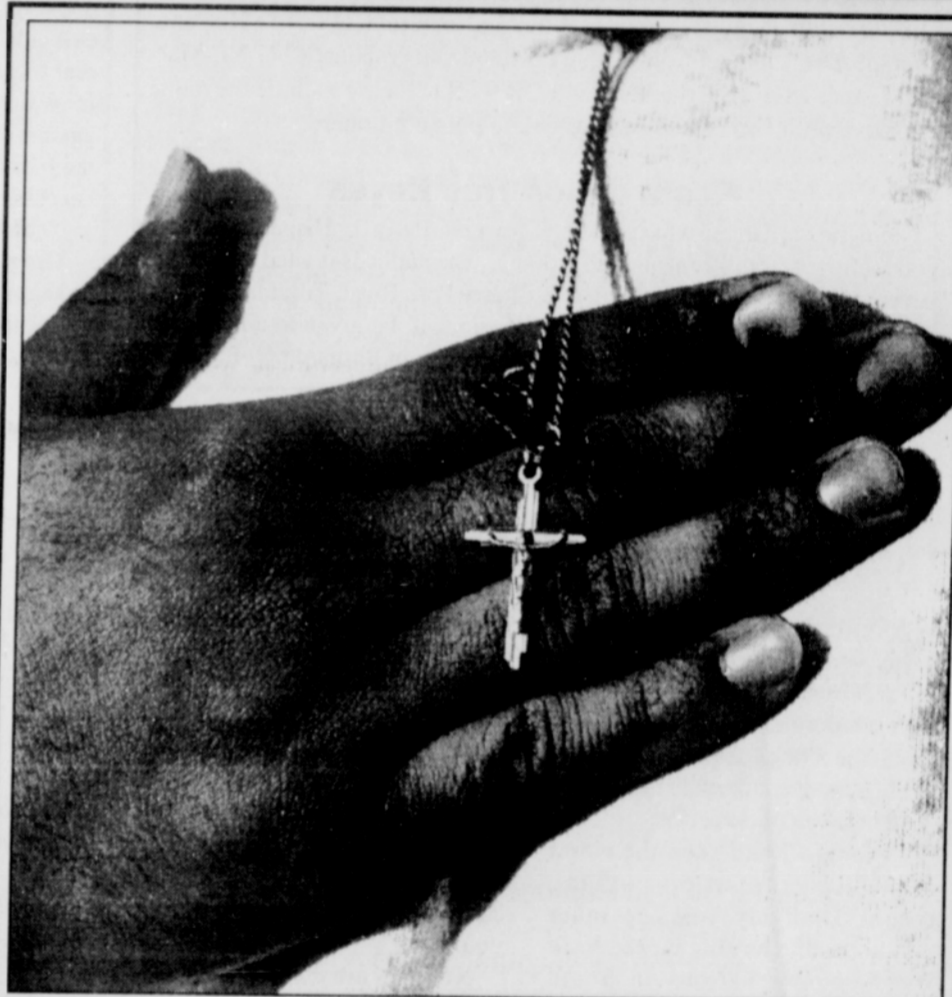
Mice and Men, Paddy Chayefsky's Middle of the Night and the Drama-Logue Award-winning Cuba and His Teddy Bear. Films include, Talent for the Game, Angel Town, American Me and ...and the earth did not swallow him.

Del Zamora (Rude Boy)--Del has appeared in fifty plays, forty-six films, and thirty-five tv shows. His theatre credits include Romeo and Juliet at CBS Studio Center, Culture Clash at the Los Angeles Theatre Center and El Luchador Chicano. He was recently seen on Television in My So Called Life and on Culture Clash. Among his film appearances are Robocop, Born In East L.A., Repo Man and...and the earth did not swallow him, written and directed by Severo Perez. Del is the original Rude Boy.

Alfredo Ramos--a gifted young Chicano writer born and raised in East L.A., The Last Angry Brown Hat introduced Alfredo to the artistic community. Chosen as the winner of Plaza de la Raza's 1993 Nuevo L.A. Chicano Playwrights Competition, LABH marks Mr. Ramos' first professionally produced play. The phenomenal success of the original production prompted in northern California at the San Jose Stage Company and again in Los Angeles as the premiere production of the Aztlan Playwrights Collective of Actors Alley in North Hollywood.

## Las Posadas (The Inns)

is a holiday that commemorates Joseph and Mary's search for lodging in Bethlehem. Las Posadas are observed from December 16 to December 24.



"Juan's Hand", photo by Alex Vargas of Hillsboro. Courtesy of Straight Shooting Project, Oregon Commission on Children and Families.

## "A Children's Posada" raises \$5,000

Members of the Portland-Guadalajara Sister City Association one again decorated a Christmas Tree for the Providence Medical Foundation's annual "Festival of the Trees".

Over the years, through grants by the Chiles Foundation, members of the association have produced a tree to be auctioned off at the annual fundraising event.

This year, under the direction of chairperson Carole McDonald, a tree with the theme "A Children's Posada" fetched \$5,000.

This was the eighth year of the association's involvement, generating proceeds of approximately \$34,500 over this period of

time.

The 1996 tree was donated to the University of Portland and displayed in the office of the President, Reverend David T. Tyson. Gifts are placed under the tree to be distributed to Catholic Parishes with a high percentage of Hispanic members.

The association is grateful to the Providence Medical Foundation, Chiles Foundation, Chairperson Carole McDonald, Dorothy Piacentini and Gabby Berry for their participation.

This year's proceeds from the auction go towards the gerontology clinic whose goal is to keep elderly patients at home longer.

## Club Hispano plays Santa Claus for kids

Some Northeast Portland youngsters had an early visit from Santa this year, thanks to efforts of Jefferson High School's Club Hispano.

The club's third-annual Christmas toy drive culminated in a Fiesta Navidena Tuesday (December 10) at Ockley Green Middle School.

The club's 25 Hispanic student members--including Santa Calejandro Vidales--raised money for the toy drive in a fundraiser this fall and by soliciting donations

from area businesses.

Needy children age 10 and younger from the Jefferson/Ockley Green neighborhood received wrapped toys at the fiesta.

Donations to Club Hispano from, Pollo Rey Restaurant, Ornelas Enterprises, Inc., Dr. E.M. de Castro, Enrique Carlos Martinez and the law offices of Linda Friedman Ramirez enabled students to purchase extra toys this year, according to club advisor Sylvia Barajas-Everson.