



**Este Duo
Dinamico Busca
Hogar Adoptivo**

See inside, page B6.

El OBSERVADOR de Portland



**La Marijuana no Debe
ser Usada Como
Medicina Aseguran
Algunos Cientificos.**

See inside, page B7.



From left to right: Miltie Vega (Paz) & Ralph Turley (Guadalupe).

Photo by Michael Parrish

*Velvet, Velour
& BURLAP*

BY ANTONIO GONZALEZ CABALLERO

Velvet, Velour and Burlap (El Medio Pelo) was written in 1964 by Mexican playwright Antonio Gonzalez Caballero. Caballero is a painter, poet and short story writer and is a keen observer of life. A great admirer of Anton Chekhov, Gonzalez Caballero brings to this play a warm-hearted realism, very much in the spirit of that earlier playwright. El Medio Pelo won the Juan Ruiz Alarcon drama prize in Mexico.

Directed by Rich Wattenberg, English translation by Vicente Guzman-Orozco. Set Designer: Paul Brown, Costume Designer: Marsha Marzano.

The play revolves around the efforts of the rancher and farmer Guadalupe Marcial to court the widow Paz Garcia de Perez. Paz, who cannot forget her youthful experiences as a wealthy urban socialite, is unhappy in isolated Apaseo, a small Mexican town. She dreams of somehow returning to energetic social and cultural life of the city. While she views herself as a misplaced "velvet", Guadalupe, a proud man of the land, is not ashamed of being associated with "burlap".

Velvet, Velour & Burlap: March 21 - April 26; Th. At 7:00 PM - \$9; Fri. & Sat At 8:00 - \$11. Discounts available to students, senior citizens and groups

Amenazas a los reporteros Argentinos

El exproductor de televisión argentino Diego Roca denunció haber sido interceptado por tres personas, posiblemente "policías", que lo amenazaron de muerte y al presentador Mauro Viale, así como a los hijos de ambos.

Aunque el exproductor aclaró a los desconocidos que no tenía relación con Viale, los agresores le respondieron: "No te hagas el bobina, no te hagas el bobo".

Por otro lado, una periodista de radio y televisión de la provincia de Santa Fe (noroeste) está siendo objeto de amenazas por causa de un programa que ella presentará este jueves sobre una investigación en centros clandestinos de detención que funcionaron en la capital provincia durante la última dictadura (1976/1983).

Ana Fiol, productora del canal Cable Video y de la radiopemisor LT 10 de Santa Fe, ha recibido varias llamadas en su domicilio con una voz masculina que la insultó y la amenazó, reclamándole a la vez que evitara la transmisión de una investigación llamada "Mujeres de Fin de Siglo".

La producción muestra imágenes de mujeres sobrevivientes de los campos de represión ilegal que utilizaron las Fuerzas Armadas y la policía provincia en esa capital entre 1976 y 1979.

El ministro de gobierno de Santa Fe, Roberto Rosúa, puso el domicilio de la periodista bajo custodia policial.

Por su lado, la Unión de Trabajadores de Prensa de Buenos Aires (UTPBA) expresó su preocupación por la escalada de amenazas a periodistas que se registraron en el último mes y, en particular, en relación con las nuevas intimidaciones dadas a conocer.

Job losses, trade gap threaten NAFTA expansion

The Clinton administration is counting on Chile's president to push Congress toward accepting his country into a reconstructed NAFTA as the next step toward creating a Western hemisphere free trade zone.

But the idea's harshest critics aren't on Capitol Hill. They are thousand of Americans whose jobs have done south to Mexico.

That makes the pertinent question whether Congress will listen to Eduardo Frei, its Chilean guest last month, or to folks like Gary Hefner, unemployed American.

Hefner was laid off last month after a 30 year career at a General Electric plant in Hickory, North Carolina. For 40 years, the plant made electrical transformers.

Last year, Hefner and 300 co-workers received notice: Saying it was no longer profile. GE was shutting the plant and moving the work to Monterrey, Mexico.

"They put us out to pasture because we were making 16 dollar hourly wages and they could get to work done in Mexico for 83 cents an hour," Hefner said.

Opponents of free trade have made similar charges since US President Bill Clinton went against labor unions and many in his own party in 1993 to push the North American Free Trade Agreement through Congress.

With the assistance of former Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan and Bush and a healthy dose of Republican support, Clinton won that against oppo-

nents who, in the phrase of Ross Perot, warned of a "giant sucking sound" as Mexico drained high-paying jobs from the United States.

The 1997 replay promises an even tougher fight. Opponents have armed themselves with statistics showing swollen trade deficits with Mexico and Canada since NAFTA's birth.

Clinton blames factors unrelated to NAFTA. He argues that unless Congress quickly renews his authority to expand NAFTA, The United States risks losing to European and Asia competitors already moving into America's economic back yard.

The president hopes by 2005 to bring not only Chile but all the democratic nations of Latin America into what would be the world's largest free trade zone.

Frei has visited Washington for a meeting with Clinton and a speech to a joint session of Congress.

Clinton travels to Mexico in April and makes his first Presidential Trip to South America the next month.

However, Clinton's carefully orchestrated sales schedule is in danger of slipping over a dispute that has tied up the free trade effort for the past two years.

Trying to mollify unions and environmentalists, Clinton wants authority to negotiate environmental and labor safeguards as part of any new trade agreement. The republicans who control Congress don't want to give Clinton such authority, saying those issues don't need to be addressed in trade agree-

ments.

In the new battle, opponents say Clinton will have to overcome a dismal NAFTA track record.

The trade agreement has cost more than 600,000 American jobs and resulted in soaring trade deficits with Mexico and Canada.

America's deficit with Mexico hit a record 16.3 billion dollars in 1996, and its imbalance with Canada rose to 22.8 billion dollars, highest in a decade.

The overall US trade deficit climbed to an eight year high 114.2 billion dollars last year, and 60 percent of the deterioration since 1993 has represented rising deficits with Mexico and Canada.

Administration officials dispute the job-losses figures. They say a special program set up under NAFTA to retrain workers has handled a far smaller 107,000 claims, which does no take into account jobs gained from record-high US exports.

The administration argues the higher trade deficit are the fault not of NAFTA but of unrelated economic forces. Mexico's economy plunged into deep recession in 1995 after a peso crisis, and the dollar has strengthened considerably against the Canadian dollar, making US exports more expensive in Canada.

Free trade supporters worry that Clinton's delay in submitting legislation will mean yet another year lost in starting negotiations to expand NAFTA, even as European and Asia rivals make inroads in Latin American markets.

HISPANIC REVIEW

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina

Teachers held a one-day nationwide strike last week to protest a heavy-handed police effort to end a long work stoppage by teachers in a southern province.

The CTERA education workers union claimed the walkout forced the cancellation of 85 percent of classes in Buenos Aires. It said the figure was even higher in several interior provinces.

Government officials, however, said the strike attracted little support and President Carlos Menem called it "a complete failure."

Border guards used tear gas and water cannons Thursday to break up a road-block set up by teachers demanding better salaries in Neuquen, about 760 miles southwest of Buenos Aires. The teachers had been on strike for 17 days.

On Saturday, more than 10,000 people marched through the provincial capital to protest the police crackdown.

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico

An American and a Canadian have been indicted on charges that they were growing marijuana on their pepper farm.

Dennis Shuwn, 37, of New Mexico, and William Robert Kennedy, 44, of Canada, were indicted last week on drug possession charges, police said.

They were arrested March 10 after police raided their ranch near the south coast city of Ponce.

Police confiscated two pounds of marijuana worth about \$1,600, and found dozens of marijuana plants growing among the peppers the men used for their hot sauce business, said Lt. Octavio Cruz.

Each of the men was released on \$6,000 bail pending trial. Each faces a minimum six-month sentence if convicted.

It was unclear how long the men had been living in Puerto Rico.

QUITO, Ecuador

Facing multiple charges of corruption, ousted President Abdala Bucaram offered in a published interview to open up his personal bank accounts to inspection.

Bucaram, who denies the charges, was quoted by the Guayaquil daily El Universo as saying that he would open his finances to public scrutiny. He did not say when he would do so.

The government's anti-corruption commission last week claimed Bucaram was the "intellectual author" of a crime organization made up of public employees in the customs department.

Bucaram, who was ousted by Congress on Feb. 6 for "mental incapacity" after only six months in office, also faces corruption charges in connection with the alleged embezzlement of more than \$80 million during his reign.

The former president is in exile in Panama.

Santana receives humanitarian awards

Although it just got started, 1997 is turning out to be a remarkable year for Bay Area guitarist Carlos Santana. Among the highlights so far are three major awards, a new release of early Santana music, and plans for a U.S. tour that will kick off in April.

In January, Carlos received the prestigious Arthur M. Sohco Award for Public Service and Excellence in Performance in recognition of his dedication to many humanitarian efforts over his long career. Carlos also received the Golden Eagle Legend In Music Award from the hispanic cultural organization, Nosotros. The ceremony, in which Santana was honored for his life-long efforts to bring a Latin influence into mainstream rock 'n roll, was taped in late January for television broadcast sometime in the near future. Then, at the Bay Area Music Awards on March 15, Carlos, who has

won ten BMMIES over his career, was among the inaugural group, along with Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead and legendary concert promoter Bill Graham, to be inducted into the newly formed BMMY Hall of Fame.

Acknowledging the long-term influence and success of Carlos and the Santana Band, the awards came just as Columbia and Sony Legacy jointly released SANTANA: LIVE AT THE FILLMORE. This double CD features tracks recorded over four nights during the Santana Band's 1968 live performances at the legendary Fillmore West in San Francisco. The two discs include five songs that have never appeared on any Santana recording and accurately capture the energy and excitement that propelled the band to stardom when, just eight months later, they won the hearts of 500,000 fans in an electrifying performance at Woodstock.

Fans will have a chance to catch Carlos and the Santana Band in concert beginning this spring. They will be kicking off their summer tour at the Jazz & Heritage Festival at the University of New Orleans Lakefront Arena in New Orleans, Louisiana, on April 25-26. From there, the group will travel to do shows in Pensacola, Florida (at the Bayfront Auditorium, 4/27); Birmingham, Alabama (Oak Mountain Amphitheatre, 4/29); Miami, Florida (Orange Bowl Stadium, 4/30); West Palm Beach, Florida (SunFest, 5/2); Jacksonville, Florida (Civic Auditorium, 5/3); Atlanta, Georgia (Music Midtown Festival, 5/4); Knoxville, Tennessee (Tennessee Theatre, 5/5); San Juan, Puerto Rico (Bellas Artes Theatre, 5/7-8); St. Lucia, West Indies (Pigeon Island National Park, 5/11); and Belo Horizonte, Brazil (location TBA, 5/16).

Prenatal care hotline available

Recently, the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations (COSSMHO) announced the establishment of the National Hispanic Prenatal Hotline (1-800-504-7081). The service is the first national bilingual hotline to answer the questions Hispanic women have about prenatal care and pregnancy.

Almost one-third (30%) of Hispanic women do not receive prenatal care in the first three months of pregnancy — a critical period in the development of the fetus.

"The National Hispanic Prenatal Hotline is the most significant national effort ever established to provide Hispanic women with the basic information they need about prenatal care and pregnancy," said Jane L. Delgado, Ph.D., President and CEO of COSSMHO.

According to Dr. Delgado, "Callers to the hotline can receive oral and written information in both English and Spanish, including on-line referrals to local health providers who can provide Spanish language prenatal services."

The National Hispanic Prenatal Hotline is funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. COSSMHO is the sole national organization focusing on the health, mental health and human service needs of Hispanic communities. Its membership comprises 1,200 frontline health and human service providers and organizations serving Hispanic communities.

Over 60 percent of COSSMHO's program budget goes back to local agencies.