

Interview with Alfredo Garza - 28 December 1999

SIDE A

Tape	Topic/Name
006	Born 16 Feb 1951 in ???? Texas
009	First trip to Oregon in 1964
015	Nine people in a 1957 Ford wagon, not enough money to make it to Oregon, had to borrow \$100-\$150
020	Arrived in Gresham, needed an apartment after sleeping at rest stops on trip to Oregon; trying to find an acquaintance who is also a migrant laborer; here to work
039	Contacted friends in Texas to get address of <u>Garcia</u> family (the family they were looking for)
043	Found the <u>Garcia</u> family at a migrant labor camp in Dayton on Grand Island
049	First job at Dayton was picking strawberries; stayed at the camp owned by <u>Stein????</u> - the farm owner
55	10—12 cabins in the migrant labor camp; approx. 14'x12', had one bed a bunk bed, stove, kitchen table, refrigerator ???, no indoor plumbing; it was cold and humid by Texas standards, didn't like the weather
070	Arrived in early June, began picking strawberries
076	Working family included Dad, four boys (older than Alfredo) and Mom (pay was based upon number of crates picked) ??
086	On good days (assume this is weather) pay was good; they worked seven days a week; did not have to pay rent in labor camp
092	Dad was sharecropper in Texas - in cotton, problems with quotas, pesticides; it was hard times
102	Picked strawberries, then pole beans, then raspberries, then blackberries, then prunes (the last in early September)
110	Time to go back to Texas
116	They brought blankets with them, Mom bought supplies need here from Salvation Army; left some things here for next year
125	Farmer happy with their work, invited them to come back next year
141	They worked sun up to sun down (paid hourly) Alfredo kept records of everyone's hours worked, farmer didn't believe they could have worked that many hours, therefore too much money, Alfredo was ready to leave - go somewhere else, Dad said "Be quiet", Alfredo

- very discouraged that evening about farmer's action, farmer's wife later called confirming Alfredo's records (see SIDE A 29d)
- 165 Farmers usually promised good crops, wanted good workers, but if crops weren't good migrant laborers lost also
- 176 Returned to Texas with enough money so that with some work there, they could get thru the winter, boys worked in rice fields on weekends, Dad in cotton fields in early spring
- 186 Summer of 1965 at the same farm as 1964
- 197 Summer of 1965 was an adventure for the kids, but tough on Mom; they saw snow for first time in Arizona in 1965 on trip here
- 210 Farmer invited them back for the next year and they came; Dad spent time meeting other farmers and people looking for another place to stay in 1966
- 215 Dad made arrangements to work at large farm on Chehalem Mountain in 1966, this was more stable and the boys could work
- 235 Working in the rain was miserable
- 242 Went to school in Hillsboro
- 252 Family stayed in the fall of 1966; couldn't identify with other kids in school, they were all Anglos, not used to being with them, kids expected to go back to Texas
- 272 Family did what Dad said, no discussion with kids
- 282 Lived on this farm on Chehalem Mountain, owner/farmer was Melvin Ziegler
- 285 Lived there for six years, nice 2-story house with three bedrooms, then bought a house in Cornelius,
- 290 Family was better off financially at Ziegler's, everyone worked, boys in the summer and on weekends, episode about hours worked and pay was at Ziegler's, (see SIDE A 141)
- 318 Big family with lots of workers was a plus, Margaret & Rita were young, but they worked
- 331 Took pail to get water from main faucet, used this water for cooking; showers were located away from cabins; doesn't know about laundry because Mom did that, she was the hardest worker – made breakfast and lunch, joined them at work all day, then cooked dinner, cleaned clothes afterwards, worked till about 10 pm, she had it tough *where was this*
- 365 Alfredo had three fights in high school due to racial tension, Alfredo wasn't afraid to fight, was a wrestler, didn't like being called "A Dirty Mexican"
- 388 There were some Japanese students, three Spanish, no blacks

398 Some teachers showed racial prejudice, Alfredo had a 90+ average in Physical Science but teacher wouldn't give him an A, gave him a B

END OF SIDE A

SIDE B

008 Continuation - because he had missed the first few weeks of class,
Alfredo' lab partner was Steve Fowles
009 Physical Science teacher was Mr. Hubert
018 Parents said do not complain about school, did not want to hear about problems
021 Mr. Davis in Texas had taken the opposite approach, given Alfredo a higher grade because he had gotten an average grade even though he had missed several weeks of class
030 This was only evidence a lowered grade
033 Alfredo was in wrestling club, because of bus schedule he missed many classes, but got a passing grade
046 Anglo students were curious about why the Garzas came to Oregon
055 Alfredo was too shy to try mixing with the Gringo girls, mostly looking for Spanish girl friend, had little understanding of cross-cultural concepts
072 There were several Hispanic families
080 Involved at Centro Cultural, mostly helping at events
083 Father Beezer from Catholic Church was helping organize the Hispanic families, having fundraisers/dinners at different churches in different communities
088 Los Amigos
097 Armitech = a training program using Tektronix products for kids to learn about electronics and get a job in that field
104 Went to U of O in Eugene in 1974, worked on medical needs project thru Migrant Education in summer of 1974
114 A young girl, Virginia Garcia, died of a bacterial infection; this led to recognized need for a facility to help Hispanics receive better health care
124 Catholic Charities got involved in project to get better health care, Centro Cultural funded clinic in 1975 ?? Alfredo becomes liaison to community thru Migrant Education program in summer 1975, worked to register people for medical care

151 In summer 1976 he provided Centro Cultural or Catholic Charities
with specific numbers of people who needed medical care; Joe Garcia
gave him that job

162 Alfredo visited the migrant camps, 10-12 camps, some had 8-12
people, other camps had more than 100 people, some camps in bad
shape – unclean

175 Harry Camp was director of Health Department when several kids at
the camps got sick, Alfredo asked Harry Camp if the water had been
checked, told not to do that again and that the water had been checked

194 Alfredo was on paid staff at Centro (8 hours a day) taking people to
the clinic, doing volunteer work he took people to St. Vincent's in the
evening, men and women were suffering with hernias (some the size
of baseballs), earlier medical care could have prevented this and other
suffering i.e., diabetes

218 Alfredo's work proved to Catholic Charities that there was a need for
medical help, Catholic Charities continued to fund it

221 Alfredo became a member of Centro's Board and of the Garcia Clinic

← 234 Older sister had gone to nursing school

244 Older brothers went into service during Vietnam War, had training
while in service, now work in electronics field

275 Treatment of Hispanics by police, Hispanics were being pulled over
by cops often cited as drunken driving

284 Justice Department became aware that %wise Hispanic arrests
exceeded % of Hispanics in population

298 Alfredo was pulled over by police, cited for drunk driving, police
listed him as Mexican on police blotter

326 A lawyer told Alfredo "if they didn't beat you up, you don't have a
case against a cop you say is lying"

342 Margaret worked in Police Department

360 Alfredo doesn't like to think about discrimination, feels he can defend
himself, but not using physical force

372 Feels that his family was an exception to Hispanic families in that the
parents pushed their kids to get an education, finish high school and
then some, Alfredo counseled Margaret when she was in high school,
need to take the hard courses, science and math, get good grades, go
to college

END OF SIDE B

END OF TAPED INTERVIEW

Comments that followed after tape was finished:

1. Margaret applied for a scholarship, was passed over and it was given to an Anglo student with a lower grade average, Mr. Hubert was a faculty member on committee deciding that scholarship
2. No practice in their family of putting all efforts on oldest male child to succeed who then had to help all his siblings
3. Daniel Garza was not a tyrant, but family knew of other families where the father was a tyrant
4. Daniel Garza related one incidence of discrimination that he endured – coming home from WWII, in uniform with the rest of his group, they stopped for lunch and filed one at a time to the counter to order, he was denied, went outside, officer in charge took him back in, told rest of group what had happened which led to a disturbance, officer filed a complaint at some government level, restaurant was closed
5. Dad was unable to work because of hernias