

**Porcion La Sal Colorada &  
Juliana Duran Bounous Oral History**

By

Janine Marie Bounous

Spring 2011

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La Sal Colorada, Starr County, La Gloria, Texas

Porcion and Oral History Project  
University of Texas Pan American  
Community Historical Archaeology Program for the  
Schools (CHAPS)

Janine Bounous

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### Las Porciones Project: La Sal Colorada

History has always been a big and interesting part of my family. Until the *Las Porciones Project* came up, I had no idea of all the history I was missing out on. Who would have known that land that my family owned was part of a land grant given by the King of Spain? From the earliest land grants, given in 1716, to the latest given in the late 1800's, South Texas went through a variety of changes during these years.

Land grants given in Texas and Mexico, called *porciones*, make up all of what today is South Texas and North Mexico. Grants given to South Texas and Northern Mexico were not given until the middle of the eighteenth century. First settlers, including the famous Jose de Escandon, had previously requested land. However, not until 1767 did the Spanish begin surveying and granting land to people (*The Handbook of Texas*). Each porcion was given a specific number that would stay the same until today. The porcion number of the *Sal Colorada* grant is 45.

*La Sal Colorada*, meaning "red salt," is located in what is today known as La Gloria, Texas. La Gloria is not a city, but more of a community and is situated about four miles west of San Isidro, Texas, or, thirty miles north of Rio Grande City, Texas. The land is, just like the name describes, completely made up of this deep red colored soil. Also, the land is mostly brush, or *monte* and is used for raising cattle and hunting by the current owner, Rafael (Ralph) Garza. Besides the land, there is a cemetery on it as well.

This cemetery has very old gravestones, the oldest probably dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. These gravestones bear some of the early Duran family members.

The *Sal Colorada* porción was first given to Vicente Sais and was 17,889 acres. The land is located in both Starr and Jim Hogg Counties, but the majority of the acreage is in Starr County. According to the *New Guide to Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in South Texas*, Vicente Sais was not the first applicant for this piece of land but, rather, his father, Gregorio Sais (Greaser, 288). Gregorio Sais had originally applied and was issued the title to the land by the State of San Luis Potosí. However, subsequent to his death, his son, Vicente Sais, applied and received land from the State of Tamaulipas on March 25, 1836. However, the patent was not issued until January 6, 1858; more than two decades later.

In the first place, Vicente Sais partitioned the large *Sal Colorada* to many grantees. One man received about eighty acres of the land. His name was Rafael Saiz [*sic*] Escobar. The land was issued to Escobar in the same year it was granted to Vicente Sais. In 1867 the land was sold to Eduardo Villarreal by Escobar. Unfortunately, I was unable to find another document until 1949, when a Pedro A. Saenz and his wife, Zulema Z. Saenz, sold the acreage to Isidro Vela. Nineteen years later, in 1968, another purchase was made by Zulema J. Saenz, who was probably a daughter or granddaughter to the previous Zulema Z. Saenz. Zulema J. Saenz was the owner of the land for only three years, and in 1971 she sold it to Octavio Saenz. Ten years later, in 1981, Octavio Saenz sold the land to the current owner, Rafael (Ralph) Garza.

Juanita Saenz Villarreal, my mother's great-grandmother, had to have been, in some way, related to the said Vicente Sais. The last name "Sais" slowly changed through

the years and would become “Saenz” in the future. Her daughter, Juliana Duran, would inherit the land after her mother’s death. On this land Juliana Duran would get married, own a home, and have 10 children (3 died early in life), including my grandfather, Ponciano Duran. My mother remembers visiting this land quite frequently, with her father, and distinctly remembers the dark red earth. My mother also remembers the land being used to raise cattle and nothing more, just as it is being used today.

Spring 2011: I recently went back to the Starr County Court House in hopes of finding a better line of sellers and buyers that pertained more to my family. I began with the most recent and found David Duran (Daniel Duran’s son and Juliana Duran’s grandson) is the owner today. The land was sold to him by his father, Daniel Duran (vol. 428, pg. 585-6, 1980) and in turn was sold to Daniel by his mother, Juliana Duran (vol. 271, pg. 391-2, 1961). The land was sold to my great grandmother by Gerardo Saenz (vol. 61, pg. 47; 1928). Because of the date it was sold to my great grandmother, Vicente Saiz, the original land grantee, probably sold or gave the land to Gerardo Saenz.

## Works Cited

Greaser, Galen D., William N. Todd, and Virginia H. Taylor. *New Guide to Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in South Texas*. Austin: Texas General Land Office, 2009.

“Land Grants.” *Texas State Historical Association- Home- Digital Gateway to Texas History*. 22 Feb. 2010. Web. <<http://www.tshaonline.org>>.



Appendix 1:  
Ponciano Duran and Cesaria Duran, father and mother of my mother, Juliana Duran  
Bounous, 1977 (?)



Appendix 2:  
Juliana H. Duran, grandmother of my mother, Juliana Duran Bounous, taken at her home  
on Sal Colorada, 1978



Appendix 3:  
From Top Left: Efrain Duran, Daniel Duran, Ponciano Duran, Bottom Left: Lilia Duran  
Lopez, Beatriz Duran Saenz  
Five of the ten children of Juliana Duran  
Taken after 1980





Appendix 4:  
Left: Ponciano Duran Sr. and his Godfather (unknown)  
Communion Photo taken on Sal Colorada  
1932



Appendix 5:  
My grandfather, Ponciano Duran's, birth certificate  
Place of Birth: Sal Colorada, Texas



Appendix 6:  
My great grandmother, Juliana Duran, and her great grandson, Jaime Flores 1976



Appendix 7:  
Tia Lile, Lilia Duran, 1987

FILE NO. 75236

349/105-

PARTITION AGREEMENT

MRS. ZULEMA J. SAENZ IND. & INDEP. EXEC. ET AL AND BLAS PEDRO SAENZ ET AL

THE STATE OF TEXAS X  
X  
COUNTY OF STARR X

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

This agreement of partition made, executed and entered into by and between Mrs. Zulema J. Saenz, Individually and as Independent Executrix and as Sole Devisee under the Last Will and Testament of Pedro Saenz, deceased; Blas Pedro Saenz and wife, Elia G. Saenz, Elma Lydia Villarreal, and husband, Merardo Villarreal of the County of Starr and State of Texas and America S. Elizondo and husband, Manuel Elizondo of the County of Hidalgo and State of Texas, being the only children of Pedro Saenz, deceased, hereafter styled party of the first part; Nasaria Saenz Laurel and husband, Braulio Laurel of the County of Starr and State of Texas, hereafter styled party of the second part; Silverio Saenz and wife, Maria Teresa Gutierrez Saenz, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, hereafter styled party of the third part; Eusebio Saenz and wife, Aurelia C. Saenz of the County of Starr and State of Texas; hereafter styled party of the fourth part; Jacobo Saenz and wife, Eliboria Saenz, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, hereafter styled party of the fifth part; Jacinto J. Saenz and wife, Juana T. Saenz, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, hereafter styled party of the sixth part; Isidro Vela, being the surviving husband of Mercedes Saenz Vela, deceased, who died intestate and without issue, hereafter styled party of the seventh part; Eugenio A. Saenz and wife, Guadalupe A. Saenz

FILE NO. 71797

WARRANTY DEED

ISIDRO VELA

TO ZULEMA J. SAENZ

THE STATE OF TEXAS }  
                          }   
COUNTY OF STARR }   
                          }   
                          }

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

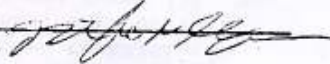
That I, Isidro Vela, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, for and in consideration of the sum of Ten and no/100 (\$10.00) dollars, cash in hand paid by Zulema J. Saenz, a widow, and other good and valuable considerations, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged and confessed and for which no lien, either expressed or implied, is reserved or retained, have granted, sold and conveyed and by these presents do grant, sell and convey unto the said Zulema J. Saenz, a widow, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, all of the following described parcel, piece and tract of land situated in Starr County, Texas, to-wit:

All of Grantors, right, title and interest lying divided and undivided in and out of Tract Numbered Five-A (5-A) of Share Numbered Three (3) of La Sal Colorada Grant, Starr County, Texas. Said Tract No. 5-A containing Ten and 416/1000 (10.416) acres of land, more or less, and being a repartition of Share Numbered Three (3) of La Sal Colorada Grant, Starr County, Texas as originally set aside and allotted to Blas Saenz, in the repartition of La Sal Colorada Grant. Said Tract No. 5-A being more fully described by metes and bounds as follows:

BEGINNING at a point, the extreme S.E. corner of Share No. 3 of La Sal Colorada Grant, the point is located in State F.M. Road 1017;  
THENCE N. 29\* 10' W. 401.10 feet to a point, the S.E. corner of Tract No. 7-A for the N.E. corner of this;  
THENCE N. 87\* 49' W. 1089.2 feet to a point on State F.M. Road 755, the S.W. corner of Tract No. 7-A for the N.W. corner of this;  
THENCE S. 38\* 20' W. 420.1 feet to a point within State to F.M. Road 755 for the S.W. corner of this.  
THENCE S. 87\* 49' E. 10549 feet to the place of beginning for the S.E. corner of this tract.

To have and to hold the hereinabove described premises, together with all and singular the rights and appurtenances thereto in anywise belonging, unto the said Zulema J. Saenz, a widow, her heirs, and assigns, forever; and we do hereby bind ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators to warrant and forever defend the title to the hereinabove described premises unto the said Zulema J. Saenz, her heirs and assigns against any person whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same, or any part thereof.

Witness my hand at Rio Grande City, Texas on this the 24<sup>th</sup> day of October, A. D., 1968.

Isidro Vela 

FILE NO. 79418

WARRANTY DEED WITH VENDOR'S LIEN

OCTAVIO SAENZ GARCIA,

TO BENJAMIN E. SAENZ

THE STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF STARR

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That I, Octavio Saenz Garcia, also known as Octavio S. Garcia and Octavio Saenz, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, for and in consideration of the sum of Four Thousand Four Hundred Sixty-six and 30/100 (\$4,466.30) Dollars cash in hand paid and secured to be paid by Benjamin E. Saenz as follows: The sum of \$3,000.00 cash in hand paid, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged and fully confessed, and the further sum of One Thousand Four Hundred Sixty-six and 30/100 (\$1,466.30) evidenced by one promissory note of even date herewith for the sum as above set out, executed by the said Benjamin E. Saenz and due on or before the 26th day of November, 1972, and payable to the order of Octavio S. Garcia at La Gloria, Starr County, Texas and bearing interest at the rate of 6 1/2 per cent per annum, from date until paid, the interest being due and payable annually, and further providing for 10 per cent additional on the amount of the principal and interest then due as attorneys fees, if placed in the hands of an attorney for collection, or in case suit is instituted upon the same, and failure to pay said note when due shall, at the option of the holder, mature the same and be subject to foreclosure, have granted, sold and conveyed and by these presents do grant, sell and convey unto the said Benjamin E. Saenz, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, all of the surface to the hereinafter described premises, to-wit:



PARTITION DEED

THE STATE OF TEXAS }  
                          }    }  
COUNTY OF STARR    }

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

THIS CONTRACT AND AGREEMENT OF PARTITION, made, executed and entered into by and between DOMINGO BAZAN and wife, DONNA B. BAZAN, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, hereinafter called PARTY OF THE FIRST PART; AURORA S. MARTINEZ and husband, JUAN MARTINEZ, of the County of Seneca and State of Ohio, hereinafter called PARTY OF THE SECOND PART; ESTELA S. GARCIA and husband, REYNALDO L. GARCIA, of the County of Seneca and State of Ohio, hereinafter called PARTY OF THE THIRD PART; DORA S. GARZA and husband, RAFAEL GARZA, of the County of Hidalgo and State of Texas, hereinafter called PARTY OF THE FOURTH PART; BENJAMIN SAENZ, JR., and wife, NOELIA R. SAENZ, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, hereinafter called PARTY OF THE FIFTH PART; and BENJAMIN SAENZ, III, and wife, REBECCA R. SAENZ, of the County of Dallas and State of Texas, and ALBERTO SAENZ, a single man, of the County of Starr and State of Texas, hereinafter called PARTY OF THE SIXTH PART, this the 26th day of March, A. D., 1981.

W I T N E S S E T H

That, WHEREAS, the above parties are the owners in common of the following described parcel, piece and tract of land, situated in Starr County, Texas, to-wit:

Tracts One (1) and Two (2) of Original Share  
Number Three (3) of the Sal Colorado Grant,  
in Starr County, Texas.

I

That, WHEREAS, the above described tracts of land presently owned by the parties to this partition agreement.

That, WHEREAS, it is the desire of the undersigned to partition the surface to and all of the oil, gas and/or minerals lying in and under the above described tracts of land.

. II

Now, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the sum of One and No/100 (\$1.00) Dollar, cash in hand paid by each of the parties above set out, each



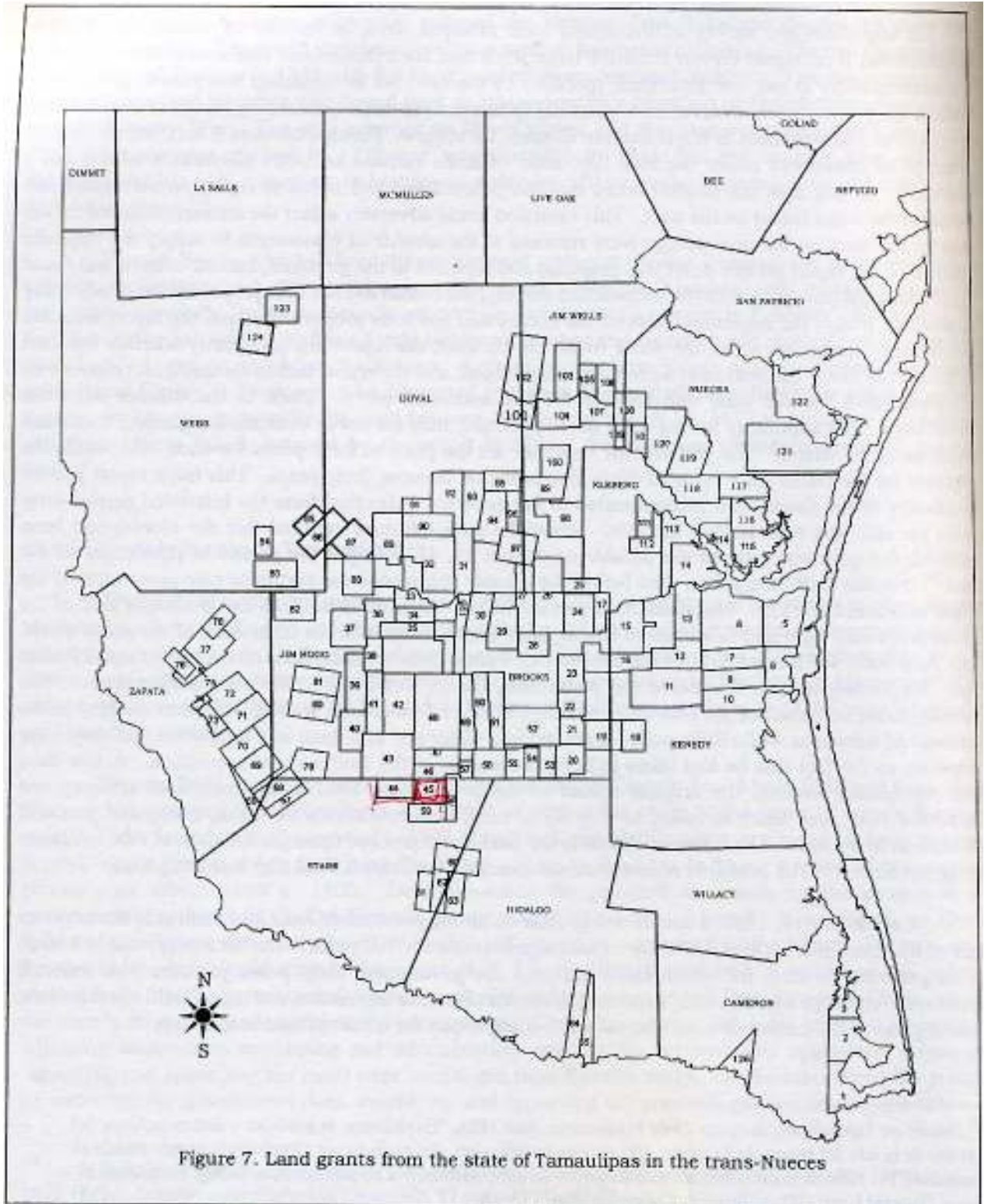


Figure 7. Land grants from the state of Tamaulipas in the trans-Nueces

**Number 45: La Sal Colorada**

**Juliana Duran Bounous  
Interview Transcription**

By

Janine Marie Bounous

Spring 2010

Dr. Russell Skowronek

Hidalgo County, McAllen, Texas

Porcion & Oral History Project  
University of Texas Pan American  
Community Historical Archaeology Program for the  
Schools (CHAPS)

**ORAL HISTORY  
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM**

Date: 4-3-10

I hereby grant Janine Bourous permission to document through audio and/or video recording and transcription oral history interview(s) for the purpose of protection, preservation, and encouragement of history, culture, tradition, and heritage. The information I agree to share with the interviewer is to be used solely for the purposes of identification and protection of Julianna Dora Bourous. The knowledge contained in the oral histories will not be given to any non-project staff except in cases where it is useful for protection and preservation purposes. When this material becomes available, it may be read, quoted, or cited from and disseminated for educational and scholarly purposes only.

This consent does not preclude any use, which I may want to make of the information contained in the recordings or transcription.

It is desired that the following restrictions be placed on this material:

Julianna D. Bourous  
Signature of Interviewee

Julianna D. Bourous  
Name

Janine Bourous  
Signature of Interviewer

Janine Bourous  
Name

**Porción & Oral History Project  
University of Texas Pan American  
Community Historical Archaeology Program for the  
Schools (CHAPS)**

Janine Bounous (JB): What is your name and date of birth?

Juliana Duran Bounous (JDB): Juliana Duran Bounous, July 31, 1956

JB: What is your occupation?

JDB: I am a teacher

JB: Where do you teach?

JDB: PSJA North High School in Pharr, Texas

JB: How are you connected to this piece of land?

JDB: This piece of land belonged to my grandmother's mother- my great-grandmother

JB: What is your great-grandmother's name?

JDB: Juanita Saenz-Villarreal- she re-married

JB: What city does this land belong to?

JDB: It belongs to Santa Elena, Texas

JB: Tell me more about Santa Elena, what do you remember about it?

JDB: It's really just a community with houses and ranches

JB: Is there anything other than ranches and houses?

JDB: (Laughs) They have a store and a restaurant and a post office...that's it. They used to years ago. I haven't been in a while.

JB: Does or did your family all live in this area?

JDB: All the children [uncles and aunts] moved except Tio Daniel, who still lived there but he died

JB: When did he die?

JDB: Let's see, Tio Efrain died in 2004. Tio Daniel died right before that.

JB: So it was pretty recent, right?

JDB: Yeah, I think it was 2000 or 2002 when it happened.

JB: Do you remember your great-grandmother?

JDB: No, I never met her

JB: So, what child did she have that the land was passed down to?

JDB: My grandmother

JB: And what was your grandmother's name?

JDB: Juliana Hinojosa and when she married it was Juliana Duran. When her mother died [Juanita Saenz-Villarreal] she used to be Juanita Saenz Hinojosa, who married Cecilio Hinojosa. But after his death she re-married a Villarreal. I don't know what his name was. His name may have been Tomas Villarreal. I think that was it.

JB: Were you named after her?

JDB: Yes... When I go see her gravestone it's weird seeing my name on it [laughs]

JB: Let's talk about the land now. Do you remember the last time you visited?

JDB: See, where the house actually sits, it is part of Sal Colorada but the land across the street was Los Retachez [another Porcion]

JB: Ok, and what year did you last visit your grandmother?

JDB: Well, I last visited in 1978 because I was looking for a job in San Isidro High School and I was going to live with her.

JB: What happened?

JDB: They didn't have an opening. She was very sad because she wanted me to live there with her. You know what I remember about that visit though? She had a big skillet of chicken guisado. And I asked her, "Who are you waiting for? Are you going to have company?" And she said, "You all are my company!" She always made lunch for whoever would come. And if no one would stop by she would give it to my uncle next door. And then we'd go out to feed the chickens...Oh, my god...I hated those chickens! By the way, she was 91 when I visited her last.

JB: 91? So how old was she when she died?

JDB: 93. She died in 1980. She always talked about that land as if it were given to them by the King. She never talked about it being portioned off from somebody to somebody to somebody and so on. She had been educated by private tutors from Spain and she would be very insulted if someone would ask if she knew how to read and write.

JB: What does the name "Sal Colorada" mean in English?

JDB: It means red sand

JB: So when you visited was there really red sand?

JDB: Yes. And by the way her drinking water was salty. So we always had to take our own water. We would bathe in the salty water but we always took our own.

JB: So how would she get drinking water?

JDB: She would drink it like that! And so would my father and cousins, they would never get sick! Ugh! It was awful! And the coffee was horrid! Oh! She would churn her own butter...mmm...well she had cattle on her land so she was able to

JB: So what do you remember about the land? What was on it? How was the landscape?

JDB: Oh, there was a cemetery. I don't really remember anything else on the land.

JB: What do you remember about the cemetery?

JDB: The old headstones...it was full of weeds. But mostly I just remember it being surrounded by brush and that a rattlesnake was going to bite me [laughs]. My grandmother was sad because on All Souls Day and traditional days people visit the graves and we never went out there. The tradition was beginning to die away. But, she moved my grandfather out of that cemetery to Rio Grande City because the old one was already owned by someone else and she knew that in the future we would never be able to get in. She thought that the new owners would not value the land the way she did. She said they were into the money, not the land. And this was the reason she moved my grandfather. And it turns out that's exactly what happened.

JB: So your grandmother valued the land a lot?

JDB: Yes. That's why her children never sold the acres they owned. We even have some acreage in the Los Retachez Porcion, which is right across the street from La Sal Colorada

JB: Across the street [laughs]?

JDB: Yes, it's literally across the street from her house

JB: Tell me about the household, what do you remember?

JDB: My grandmother would always get up at 5 in the morning and make breakfast and make a lot of noise so we would get up [laughs]. We could always smell the breakfast. She would sleep in her twin bed and she had a full poster size bed that Tio Efrain [a son] has in his house. She would mark all of her furniture with the initials "JHD." And Tio Efrain even showed me the initials on some furniture the last time I saw him.

JB: What about the work/chores?

JDB: Well she lived alone so my cousins next door would always come and help her until one of them came and just stayed with her. All of her children left and went to Rio Grande City or Edinburg, like my father, and one son, Tio Daniel, stayed with her next door

JB: Did your grandmother or anyone else ever talk about the porcion in regards to the King?

JDB: Yes. She did and Tio Efrain and my father. Oh, and Tio Ramon Longoria. Tio Ramon owned a big chunk of Sal Colorada. Ramon Longoria was my father's oldest first cousin, so he remembered a lot. He owned a lot of acres, maybe around 400 or more

JB: How do you think the Saenz family, the original family receiving the land grant, is related to your family?

JDB: Through Juanita Saenz, my great-grandmother

JB: Do you have any other stories you'd like to share about the land or history of it?

JDB: Let me see, let me think. Oh! I had always heard my grandmother talk about Benjamin Saenz. So I know somewhere there's a relation.



JB: Wait, who was Benjamin Saenz?

JDB: Benjamin is the grandfather of the owners today. And my grandmother always used to mention a Benjamin Saenz

JB: Any other stories? Of your grandmother maybe?

JDB: You see, when her husband died, she swore she would never have her children have a step-father because she had to have one. So her children could keep their property and their land. That was very important to her. Keeping the land.

JB: That's great. Thank you for your time and interview.

**Margarita Duran Flores**  
**Interview Transcription**  
By  
Janine Marie Bounous  
Spring 2011  
Dr. Russell Skowronek  
Hidalgo County, McAllen, Texas

Janine Bounous (JMB): Can you state your name?

Margarita Duran Flores (MDF): Margarita Flores

JMB: Okay. How are you related to the land?

MDF: Um, I'm the granddaughter of Juliana Duran

JMB: Okay. And the daughter of Ponciano

MDF: The daughter of, yes, Ponciano Duran

JMB: Okay. What can you tell me about the name "Sal Colorada?" Why did they give it that name?

MDF: Well, I really don't know much about...I mean I know that it was called that, but I really don't why they named it that or, or who named it that.

JMB: Because it means red, you know, well technically it means red salt but, I mean the ground was...

MDF: Well yes the ground was red it was uh, I remember when we used to drive up there, the sand was red. Maybe that's why they decided to call it that.

JMB: It was really red? You remember it being...

MDF: Yeah! I remember it being red

JMB: Okay.

MDF: Well it was darker than that [a bag]...but I remember it, yeah

JMB: Okay. When was the last time you went? Do you remember how old you were? Or what you went for?

MDF: Yes it was...the last time I was there was my Uncle Daniel's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday which was...

JMB: I think I went too...out there...

MDF: Yes! We all did! That was the last time

JMB: I remember it

MDF: It was his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, I remember, um, okay he was 89 when he passed away, so that was nine years earlier.

JMB: Yeah, I was young but I remember it being, I think, Tio Lalo [Eulalio] was still alive and I think and Tio Efrain

MDF: All of them were alive. Tio Lalo, Tio Efrain, and of course Tio Daniel, and uh, my other cousins, all my cousins were there.

JMB: How many cousins are there in that famil?

MDF: Oh my gosh! Well, my Tio Lalo had seven, my Tio Efrain had seven, my Tia Bea [Beatriz] had, uh, five, Tia Lile [Lilia] had eight!

JMB: [Laughs]

MDF: And they all were there I remember!

JMB: And just...your dad had three

MDF: And my dad had three. He was the only one that had the least. Yeah because one of my aunts was a twin and one of those twins had twins!

JMB: [Laughs] So twins run in our family..

MDF: Yeah, mhm

JMB: Okay. Do you remember the last time you visited your grandmother?

MDF: Yes. She was in the nursing home in Rio Grande City in 1980.

JMB: And that's the year she died, right?

MDF: That's the year, yeah, she was ninety-three years old

JMB: What about the last time you saw her at the house on the land?

MDF: [Long pause] Oh my gosh. Well it was in the...I know it was in the seventies, but I can't remember the exact year

JMB: Mhm

MDF: Yes. Before she, before they uh had to take her to the nursing home

JMB: Right

MDF: I'm not exactly, I'm not sure what year it was maybe about '75

JMB: Okay

MDF: That was the last time I saw her at the house

JMB: And was she still working the land? I mean was she...

MDF: No, no she was retired from that, she was just there at her house, but she didn't do anymore work on the land or anything

JMB: Mhm...and who would help her?

MDF: Um my Tio Daniel, that lived right next door to her.

JMB: Okay. So he lived on the land, too? He had a house there?

MDF: Yes, right next door to my grandmother's

JMB: Did any of the other kids have a house there? Or was it just him? Because they moved to Rio Grande City...the kids, the rest of the kids?

MDF: No, no. The oldest, Tina, she lives there in Edinburg ever since she was married. She's with her husband because her husband was from over there, too. But when they got married, they settled in Edinburg.

JMB: This is Tina?

MDF: Yes.

JMB: And Tina is who?

MDF: She's Tio Daniel's daughter

JMB: Okay

MDF: And all the other ones...one lives in Houston, one lives in San Antonio, the ones that are still there is Tio Daniel's younger daughter, Clarette, and his youngest son, Mario..and David. They all still live there at the house

JMB: So do you know if they...do they still have your grandmother's house?

MDF: My grandma's house is there but it's abandoned...they haven't done anything to it

JMB: Oh, okay. Do you remember when you were younger would she have you do chores or...

MDF: Oh yes! As soon as we would arrive she would, she always had chickens, and pigs, and cows, and all that. She would have us go pick up the eggs and feed the pigs and the chickens

JMB: Did she have you milk the cows?

MDF: No not that! No, my dad would do that. My dad and my uncle that lived next door, they would do that...the milking of the cows or goats

JMB: [Laughs] So you had goat milk, too?

MDF: Yeah

JMB: That's neat. Let's see. Okay well mom said that there was something about the water...that it was salty?

MDF: Yes! The water there has always been salty. We never liked it. We always had to take our own water. Until this day the water is still the same as far as we know

JMB: Really?

MDF: Yes! And one of my other aunts, Bea, when she lived further on [the land], she had real good water! She had a well, but it was very good water, it wasn't salty at all...that's why we liked to go to her house!

JMB: It was there on the land, though?

MDF: No it was where she lived. She lived about four miles. Four or five miles from my grandmother

JMB: Oh that's not far. So your grandma, would she even cook with that water?

MDF: Oh yes! She would always cook with that water. She would...They were used to it. My uncle and all of them drank it, too, there

JMB: And showered in it and everything?

MDF: Yes

JMB: [Laughs]

MDF: Oh, yes! Mhm

JMB: Um, what about, I mean, did your grandmother ever talk about how important the land was, or why she never sold it?

MDF: Well, she always said that this land was going to be her children's and that she was going to divide it by acres to her sons and daughters. Which she did! Each son and daughter got seven and a half acres

JMB: Okay. And have any of them sold it?

MDF: Yeah, one daughter sold her...

JMB: Her portion

MDF: Yeah, their portion

JMB: Okay. Did she ever talk about the actual portion being granted by the king? Did she ever talk about the King of Spain giving the land grants

MDF: No, I don't remember hearing her talk about that

JMB: Mhm. Well she was obviously a very strong woman because she raised all those kids on her own

MDF: Yes, on her own, because she never did remarry after my grandfather passed away. She never...

JMB: Your grandfather's name was...

MDF: Eulalio Duran

JMB: Eulalio Duran. And when did he pass away? Was it when all the kids were really little?

MDF: Uh, well, what we remember is that she was pregnant with my dad. She was six months pregnant from my dad, which is the youngest

JMB: This is Ponciano...?

MDF: Yes, Ponciano

JMB: Do you remember when your dad was born?

MDF: He was born on May 24, 1924

JMB: 1924. So it was in the twenties when he passed away. And she died in 1980. So she raised her kids all through...wow...all by herself! And I'm sure she had them working

MDF: Oh, yes! My aunts would always tell us every day when they were old enough to do chores, they would do everything! The housecleaning, the cooking, and they would have to go feed the animals when the men weren't there, they had to do all that. And uh, they went to school but I don't remember my aunts graduating. I don't think they graduated, because they hardly knew any English

JMB: Oh, but just the aunts?

MDF: Just the aunts.

JMB: Because Papo [Ponciano] did right?

MDF: Yes, dad did, my Tio Efrain did...I think they're the only two that graduated!

JMB: Really?

MDF: Yes!

JMB: Tio Daniel didn't?

MDF: No, no. But Tio Lalo, my Tio Efrain, and Tio Daniel, they did go to war...they were in the army. The three of them. Yes, my dad wasn't in it because he didn't pass his physical...he was flat-feet, he had flat feet. Oh and because of the mole, the birthmark he had on his back they didn't, he didn't pass because of that. And he was the only one...he had to quit school for a whole year because he was the only man left in the house

JMB: So he had to work

MDF: Because he had to help my grandmother work the land. Until one of my uncles returned to war, he returned to school the following year

JMB: Oh, did they all go to war?

MDF: The three of them. Yes, Tio Efrain, Tio Lalo, and Tio Daniel. One of them was in France I remember...

JMB: You don't remember which one?

MDF: Uh...Tio wait, wait, wait...Tio Lalo.

JMB: Tio Lalo went to France

MDF: Yes

JMB: Do you remember where Daniel and Efrain went?

MDF: No. I don't remember. I just remember that they went but I don't know where. I remember that my Tio Lalo went to France because my dad told me that

JMB: I wonder if they have any pictures of them in their uniforms?

MDF: Mamaita used to have them, yes, I saw them there at her house...Tio Lalo...I saw Tio Lalo and Tio Efrain in their uniforms

JMB: You saw pictures...

MDF: Yes, I remember...I don't know who stayed with them. After she passed away they, you know, auctioned off everything.

JMB: So when she passed away everyone...her furniture and everything was auctioned?

MDF: Yeah, well, yeah between the family

JMB: Oh okay

MDF: Everybody kept something. Like remember that cabinet that you had there outside? It was like uh, it would have been like a...something like this [points to china cabinet], but very old-fashioned. It was outside there in your garage for a long time. Your mom said that she would bring that because she wanted to restore it. I don't even know if it's still there or not

JMB: [Laughs] I don't think so...But it was your grandmother's?

MDF: Yes, it was my grandmothers, uh huh. Dad and my Tio Daniel they got one of the bedroom sets. And my Tio Efrain got one of the other bedroom sets

JMB: What did they look like...Like, were they all wood

MDF: Oh, yes she had beautiful beds! Especially the one in her room, the big bed where we used to sleep when we'd spend the night, it was beautiful. It was those big, uh, what do you call them...

JMB: Like the poles?

MDF: Yes, yes

JMB: Oh, like the four, like a post

MDF: Yes, yes and the blankets were made by them...my grandmother and my aunts. I remember that too because when my mother told me that when she got married with dad, her sister in laws and my grandmother, they brought her a big box, and it was all full of blankets and pillowcases and tablecloths, they were handmade by them...they were beautiful, they were beautiful I remember

JMB: I wonder where all that ended up...?

MDF: We had some of the blankets but they would tear and you know... but they did all that...they did a lot of quilting

JMB: I think mom has a quilt, it's blue and it has a kind of flower design on it. It's a quilt and I know she said that her grandmother made it, I guess it was...

MDF: Yeah, her and my aunts, they used to do all that

JMB: So, uh, do you remember going out, exploring the land when you were little? Did you ever go out and...

MDF: Yeah! We used to go out to the back, the back of her house. At that time when we were all little, we could go to the cemetery because she had her cemetery there in the...to the back of her house. And I remember a few times we would go back there and all her brothers and sisters and my aunts and uncles, they were all buried there. And as the years passed, they closed the back, there, they fenced the back so we couldn't go through there anymore. We had to go through the highway.

JMB: About how far was it from the back of her house?

MDF: Mm...it was I guess about...a mile and a half



JMB: Oh, so you would just walk back there  
MDF: Mhm

JMB: And what about the land...was it...were there a lot of trees or brush  
MDF: There were a lot of trees, a lot of brush, a lot of sand

JMB: The red sand?  
MDF: Yes, the red sand

JMB: So was the dirt more like sand or just, like, dirt?  
MDF: Uh, well at that time it was sand and it was red, I do remember that!

JMB: What about animals, did you ever see animals on the land?  
MDF: Yeah we used to see a lot of bobcats, and of course rabbits, and deer, and javelinas

JMB: Would your grandmother or her sons or whoever was there would they ever go out and kill the animals and eat them? Like rabbits...and rattlesnakes?  
MDF: Oh, yes!

JMB: [Laughs] I don't know if you ever ate rattlesnakes...  
MDF: Well, that we never ate. But I remember we did eat rabbit, and javelin, tambien

JMB: Really, you'd eat the javelinas?  
MDF: Yes, yes. Actually, I remember, yeah, that the... sometimes they would kill the javelina and the men would cook it outside...

JMB: [Laughs] What did that taste like?  
MDF: Well, actually, it was pretty good! Well it was pork, see? And they would just cook it outside and it was good!

JMB: Maybe that's why mom hates pork so much now [Laughs]  
MDF: And I remember, too that in winter, they would kill a pig and they would make tamales

JMB: Oh, really?  
MDF: Yeah, the women would make tamales. And the men would stay out there and make chicharones...and the women would make the tamales...you know the pork. Of course they would clean it up real well first, then they would cook and and make the tamales

JMB: Now that you're talking about all the family, what about, I understand there was some intermarrying going on. I know the Saenz you know there's a Saenz group that married cousins, or something

MDF: Yes, my Tia Bea was married to a Saenz and they were second cousins. Now, I don't remember Tio Juan's family at all. No, I don't think I ever got to meet them. Or if I did I was very small and don't remember

JMB: Who was Tio Juan?

MDF: Tio Juan is my Tia Bea's husband

JMB: Okay Bea is...

MDF: Bea is my father's sister

JMB: Okay, okay and Juan is her husband

MDF: Mhm. And they were second cousins

JMB: And she became a Saenz

MDF: Yes, yes

JMB: Because I know that the initial person that the king granted the land to was Vicente Sais, which became Saenz. Do you remember anyone, or meeting, or your grandmother talking about any Saenz before that?

MDF: Yes...

JMB: Benjamin, I think? There was a Benjamin Saenz...do you know who he was?

MDF: No, I really don't. I remember her talking about him and a Cruz Saenz, too

JMB: Who?

MDF: Cruz, Cruz Saenz she said that they were, to her, they were cousins. But I don't know how...if they were first cousins or second cousins. She said all the Saenz' that lived along the highway where she used to live, they were all related to us

JMB: Okay. And then of course with the intermarrying and everything [laughs] we stayed in the family

MDF: [laughs] yes, yes.

JMB: Um, do you remember going there as a teenager hanging out with your cousins.

What would you do? Because I know it's not even a city.

MDF: Oh, yes! Well there was a theatre and when we went, it was usually on weekends, we would usually go there to the theatre on Saturday nights. And they had school dances there and we'd go to the school dances

JMB: You'd go with your cousins?

MDF: Yes

JMB: Even though you went to Edinburg, right?

MDF: Yes but on weekends they usually had dances there at school...where they attended...San Isidro High school...they would have dances and we would go on Saturdays

JMB: Okay. So the land is in where, La Gloria. But they went to school in San Isidro  
MDF: San Isidro, yes. Which is five miles away.

JMB: And that's where your dad graduated from...and which other one?  
MDF: Yes, from San Isidro High School. Tio Efrain

JMB: I wonder why the other ones didn't...  
MDF: I don't remember dad ever saying that Tio Lalo and Tio Daniel graduated from high school. Like I said before my dad had to quit for a year to help out at the ranch, but he went back and graduated the following year.

JMB: And your aunts, I mean, they just got married or they didn't, they weren't expected to go to school back then?  
MDF: I guess not, I'm sure they didn't. Because like I said they hardly knew English

JMB: Right. So what about your grandmother's house, other than the furniture because you remember the furniture, was there anything else you remember, the way she cooked or the way she, what she had decorated, or...  
MDF: She always had a lot of pictures hanging on the walls of all the family. Her daughters and sons and her grandchildren, she always had pictures hanging on the walls. And of course the pictures of my grandfather and my great grandfather, which we got

JMB: You have them?  
MDF: Yes. Remember those pictures that I brought?

JMB: Oh yes, I couldn't take pictures of them because of the glass, right?  
MDF: Yeah, it was my grandfather and my great grandfather

JMB: Okay. And do you remember, okay because you weren't born, but do you remember your grandmother ever talking about them? Your grandfather and your great grandfather?  
MDF: She would always talk about my grandfather. What a, that he was a very nice man, a quiet man, and he was a very hard worker, he would always provide for them until he passed away

JMB: She was married twice, right? Was she married twice?  
MDF: My grandmother? No. Not my grandmother.

JMB: Then your great grandmother...  
MDF: Yes. Yes, mhm

JMB: What was your great grandmother's name again, do you remember?  
MDF: Did I say Mama Juanita?

JMB: Because your grandmother's name is Juliana, like my mother [Laughs]  
MDF: Yeah, Julianita. They named Julie [my mother] after grandmother

JMB: Because the last name was...was there a Villareal in the family? That was her...I know she married a Villareal, I don't know if it was the first or second

MDF: Because it was Tio Tomas Villareal

JMB: And Tomas was your dad's godfather, right? And he's in that picture, right?

MDF: Yes. You have that picture, right?

JMB: Yeah, we have it. I put it in the...

MDF: Where he made his First Holy Communion

JMB: Yeah and that's when me and mom, mom and I, didn't know who it was, but then you knew who it was

MDF: Yeah, Tomas Villareal. They lived down the road from my grandmother's. It was about half a mile

JMB: Okay. Tio Tomas was...who

MDF: Okay they were grandmother's, my grandmother's, half brothers

JMB: Half brothers?

MDF: Yes, yes, yes,

JMB: Okay got it

JMB: Okay. Yeah we had no idea who that man was but that's when we saw that Papo [Ponciano] looked just like Jacob [Margarita Flores's son]. They looked just alike!

MDF: [Laughs]

JMB: Anyway. Okay, let's see, is there anything you remember about, because there wasn't really anything in La Gloria...just land and...

MDF: Land and they had two grocery stores. One was right next door to my grandmother's. And I remember I used to go play with Mr. Garcia's daughter, Araceli, they lived right next door to grandma. And they had a grocery store. We used to go there to buy drinks and candy and all that. And then the other store was a little further down, about a quarter of a mile

JMB: Real close to each other

MDF: Yes

JMB: I guess for all the land owners...

MDF: Mhm and right across the street was the movie theatre

JMB: So there was a movie theatre...I'm sure it was only one theatre [Laughs]

MDF: Yes, oh yea and every Saturday they would show movies, I remember. And Araceli, the one that lived next door to my grandmother, she would ask me to, because they, I believe it was theirs, yes, it was their theatre

JMB: They owned that, too?

MDF: Yes. And she would ask me if I wanted to go help her in the concession stand

JMB: Oh, and you'd go help?

MDF: Yes

JMB: With popcorn and stuff?

MDF: With popcorn and raspas and candies, yeah, I would help her

JMB: So she, or her parents, owned the grocery store and the theatre

MDF: And the theatre, yes

JMB: Araceli Garcia?

MDF: Yes

JMB: That's neat. I'm sure there was maybe a post office or something...maybe? Or did you have to go somewhere else?

MDF: No. Just as you, uh, when you go from here to La Gloria, there at the stop sign where you're going to turn to La Gloria, the post office is right on your right side, before you make that turn. Because, see, when you go there, you can either, to your right side is La Gloria, no no, to your left side is La Gloria and to your right side is Santa Elena, another small town, and there was the post office. Real small!

JMB: Right, mhm. And I understand that literally if you walked across the street from your grandmother's house, from the Sal Colorada Land, you'd be on the Retachez Land, that I think ya'll still have some ownership in?

MDF: Oh, yes! Where they used to live before they moved over here!

JMB: So they lived on Retachez first?

MDF: Mhm

JMB: And it was literally across the street right?

MDF: Yes, they would cross the street. It was about a mile from where they live now. And I remember that we used to go there a lot, especially during summer, my uncle would, how do you say, he would have watermelons, plant watermelons and cantaloupes and all that. And she would tell us to go get watermelons. Sometimes we would walk, me and my cousins, and we would bring some watermelons. And sometimes we would spend Easter, Easter Sundays, over there, too, because it was beautiful over there. There were a lot of trees and sunflowers. There were a lot of sunflowers on the ground. Sometimes we would spend our Easters there. And they had one of those big wagons, those like chuck wagons, and we all used to play there, I remember we used to get on it and just play there until my grandmother bought over here, her new land, and they moved over here

JMB: Well that's neat. I know mom said that Uncle Ponce still pays taxes on that land and everything

MDF: Ponce's paying taxes on our part

JMB: So you guys still have, own some of that land?

MDF: Seven and a half acres

JMB: Wow, on the Retachez...

MDF: But there's nothing there. There's no water, no gas

JMB: Right, just land

JMB: Yeah, but my brother Ponce is still paying taxes on that

JMB: Right. Yeah, because I know when I was looking at the, at the Court House there in Rio, when I was looking through the big title deed, you know title books, and everything, lots of them would say the name of your grandmother and her kids, and it would say Sal Colorada and Los Retachez. So it was kind of...they had a lot of land! And Sal Colorada was huge! So many names I didn't even, I didn't even recognize, now. I guess because they divided it up so much

JMB: Can you remember anything else, any stories, if you remember a funny story or...

MDF: Well, no there, it was, we all used to have a good time there because especially when all my uncles and aunts used to come by and we all used to spend the night there they used to sit down and tell us 'oh we used to do this when we were young' and, uh, we always had a good time. She would tell stories of when they lived over in the other ranch. But, she said it was, we were always happy because, you know, we were always poor but we always had food to eat because we had cattle and chickens and all that. And of course when she said you know all my daughters and sons grew up and they got married and left

JMB: Mhm. Except for Daniel [Laughs]

MDF: Except Daniel, he was the only one who stayed there

JMB: Because Papo went to Edinburg...

MDF: Yes, when Papo graduated from high school, he, my Aunt Lile [Lilia] told him that her husband, Domingo, he had found a job for him there in Edinburg. So my dad came to Edinburg and he lived there with my aunt. He lived there until he got married, with her [his wife, Cesaria], if I remember, yes.

JMB: And the rest of the kids?

MDF: The rest of them were already married, he was the only one that you know...

JMB: Daniel stayed there and lots of them went to Rio didn't they?

MDF: My Tio Lalo and my Tio Efrain always lived in Rio Grande

JMB: And the twins?

MDF: And my Tia Bea, the one that was married to my Tio Juan, she lived over here in, like I said it was about four or five miles from where Mamaita lived. And my Tia San Juanita, the oldest of the girls, she lived in Rio Grande City, too. And my Tia Lile she's the one that lived here in Edinburg

JMB: Everyone left the tiny town [Laughs]

MDF: My Dad always said ‘ Oh yes since there was so much to do there’ [Laughs]

JMB: [Laughs] Well I guess to do anything they’d have to go to Rio but even then Rio doesn’t, didn’t have anything up until now, even now they don’t have much, I think they have a movie theatre!

MDF: No, no, no [Laughs]

JMB: Okay, well if there’s nothing else that you can remember...

MDF: I can’t remember anything else

JMB: Okay, well, thank you!

Informed Consent Form

Las Porciones Project

1. You are being asked to participate in interviews for recording and preserving your life history in the "Las Porciones Project." Because of your roots in and knowledge of the South Texas community The University of Texas—Pan American Library welcomes the opportunity to be a repository of these interviews.

In general and as briefly discussed with you, topics planned that will cover your memories and experiences regarding your:

- a) Family history
- b) Relationship to land.

Our hope is to provide a personable, anecdotal oral history of your life that will enrich the local community, while providing further material from which researchers can draw. Please let us know if there are any topics you would like to discuss or specific questions you want to have asked.

2. The interviews will be videotaped, transcribed, and made available for public and scholarly use at THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—PAN AMERICAN LIBRARY. Any member of the general public will have access to these interviews and your words may be quoted in scholarly and popular publications. During the interview you may request to stop the recording at any time to discuss or clarify how you wish to respond to a question or topic before proceeding.
3. The interviews are currently scheduled to begin Dec. 2010 - Feb. 2011. It is hoped that May 2011. Thereafter, postproduction transcribing will be completed by May 2011. After each tape is transcribed, you will be asked to review both the written or audio transcripts and possibly videotapes and provide feedback. If there is anything in the transcript (of the interview) that you want to have edited out, you have the option to do so.
4. The interviews currently planned will take approximately half an hour. It is hoped that the topics outlined above can be covered in 1-2 interviews. There are no anticipated risks to participation in this interview. However, you can withdraw from the interview at any time without prejudice prior to the execution and delivery of a DEED OF GIFT (see the attached form). You will also have the opportunity to make special provisions or restrictions in the DEED OF GIFT. In the event that you choose to withdraw during the interview, any audio recording or videotape made of the interview will be either given to you or destroyed, and no transcript will be made of the interview.

With your permission, any photographs taken of you or borrowed for duplication during the interview(s) will be kept for further use by THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—PAN AMERICAN LIBRARY. If you withdraw from the project, all copies of any photographs will be given (or returned) to you. Any negative or digital image will be destroyed.

5. Subject to the provisions of paragraph six below, upon completion of the interview, the tape and content of the interviews belong to THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—PAN AMERICAN LIBRARY, and the information in the interviews can be used by THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—PAN



AMERICAN LIBRARY in any manner it will determine, including, but not limited to, future use by scholars and researchers in presentations and publications.

6. THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—PAN AMERICAN LIBRARY agrees that:
- A. It will not use or exercise any of its rights to the information in the interview prior to the signing of the DEED OF GIFT.
  - B. The DEED OF GIFT will be submitted to you for your signature before the interview or, if you choose, after you review the videotapes and transcripts.
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- a. You have the right to withdraw at any time from the interviews and any materials created during the interview process will be destroyed or returned to you;
  - b. You have the right to stop the interview process to clarify how you want to proceed with answering a question or any other information you may need to proceed;
  - c. You have the right to refuse to answer or discuss any topic broached during the interview process;
  - d. You have the right to impose restrictions on the use of the material, including sealing portions of the interview or even to choose to remain anonymous. This can be done with an addendum to the DEED OF GIFT or any restrictions can be implanted into the text of the DEED OF GIFT;
  - e. And, of course, you have the right to reschedule any planned interview at your discretion.
10. If you have questions about the oral history interview project or procedures, you can contact:

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Interviewer signature Janine M. Bounous

I agree to participate in this interview.

Interviewee Printed Name: Margarita D. Flores

Interviewee signature: Margarita D. Flores

Address: 621 E. Samano St. Edinburg TX 78539

Phone number: 956-498-8246

Date: 12.1.2010

**DEED OF GIFT**

I, Margarita Flores of Edinburg,  
Texas County of Hidalgo, Texas herein  
permanently give, convey, and assign to THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—  
PAN AMERICAN LIBRARY, my interview (or oral memoir), consisting of  
one interview(s) conducted on 12/1/2010.

In so doing, I understand that my interview (or oral memoir) will be made available to researchers and may be quoted from, published or broadcast in any medium (consisting of all forms of print or electronic media, including the Internet or other emerging, future technologies that may be developed) that THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—PAN AMERICAN LIBRARY shall deem appropriate.

In making this gift, I fully understand that I am conveying all legal title and literary property rights which I have or may be deemed to have in my interview (or oral memoir) as well as my rights, title and interest in any copyright which may be secured under the laws now or later in force and effect in the United States of America. My conveyance of copyright encompasses the exclusive rights of: reproduction, distribution, preparation of derivative works, public performance (including digital audio transmission), public display, digitization or Internet publication as well as all renewals and extensions.

I, Janine Bounous, accept the interview (or oral memoir) of  
Margarita Flores for inclusion into THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—  
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Margarita D. Flores  
[Interviewee signature]

Janine Bounous, Research Assistant  
[representative of UTPA, Title]

05/17/2011  
Date

