

UPDATES &
UPCOMING
EVENTS
P.1 -2

COMMUNITY
MEMBER
HIGHLIGHTS
P.3



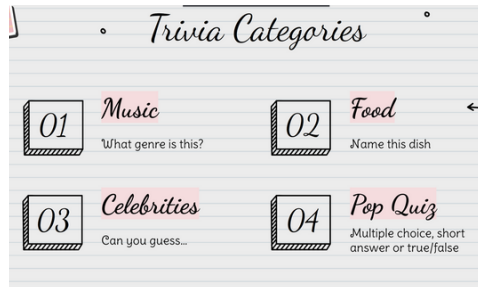
TROMPO &
LOTERIA
P.4-5

COMMUNITY
EVENTS &
RESOURCES
P. 6-7

Familias Latinas

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023



Familias Latinas participated in Albany High School's Diversity Week. Students won prizes for answering trivia questions about Latino/x culture.

Familias Updates

Albany High School celebrated diversity week from 2/13 to 2/17. Familias Latinas participated by having a booth where students could win candy by playing a bean bag game and win gift cards by answering trivia questions. Trivia questions were asked about Latin foods, music, celebrities, and history. We were excited to have many students participate from diverse backgrounds. We hope they walked away learning something new about Latino/x culture.

Throughout the past month our leadership team has also been meeting with school principals and assistant principals to better understand how our Latino/x students are doing and how we can collaborate to best support our Latino/x students and families. One consistent theme is the importance of making sure that Latino/x voices are heard. Please keep an eye out for sign sheets for the district's Listening Campaign, which is an opportunity for families to share their experiences. If you would like to learn about other ways to get involved in your child's school, please email us to learn about different opportunities.

CONTINUED ON P.2



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www.facebook.com/groups/famlatinasalbanyca

Familias Upcoming Events

Game Night:

Sunday, February

26th

1pm-5pm

Albany High School

Spend your Sunday playing games with us! We will have games for all ages - a pinata, board games, video games, card games, etc... In addition, we will have several rounds of Loteria. We get to support our scholarships and you get a chance to win a prize!



Albany Middle School's Meet and Greet: Wednesday, March 1st at 6 pm

The AMS principal, Eric Mapes, and assistant principal, Catherine Floresca, are hosting a meeting and greet for Familias Latinas members to get to know them. This is a chance to learn about the middle school and ask any questions you have.

AUSD Listening Campaign: March

The district will host focus groups for parents to share their thoughts about what's helping their students and what challenges they are facing. If you have facilitated focus groups in the past and are interested in helping the Listening Campaign please email me. Familias Latinas wants to encourage parents to sign up for focus groups - sign-up sheets will be shared soon!

Cornell's Got Talent: Sunday, March 11th from 1pm-5pm

Familias Latinas' dance crew has been practicing hard and is looking great! At the end of the performance, we are hoping to have students come on stage waving flags from different Latin American and Hispanic countries. We want to make sure all countries are represented, so we need more students to wave flags!! If your child goes to Cornell and wants to wave a flag please email me! We need about 10 more students!!



Community Member Highlights

It is my pleasure to introduce Gabriela (Gabby) Mendoza to our community. Gabby has a 5-year-old son, Esteban, at Ocean View Elementary. Esteban enjoys swimming, playing at the park with friends, and all things Spider-Man and Sonic.

Gabby and her family joined Familias Latinas to have a sense of connection and community to their culture. Gabby's mother is Nicaraguan and Salvadoran and her father is Native American (Cherokee and Apache tribes) and Caucasian. Gabby's mother fled to the United States during the Civil War in Nicaragua in 1979 and settled in Salinas, California where she met Gabby's father. Gabby was born in Salinas and grew up in a small farming community in the Salinas Valley called Gonzales.

Gabby's academic path is an example to our students: we can always shift our path to align with our passions. After high school, Gabby completed her Bachelor of Science in Child Development. As a preschool teacher for several years, Gabby worked with many families entering the US as refugees and immigrants. These families needed significant support connecting to community resources. Furthermore, Gabby saw the need for bilingual and bicultural advocates in our community.

This gap in direct services made Gabby shift her career focus. Although she was two classes away from graduating with a



Gabriela (Gabby) Mendoza

Master's in Early Childhood Education program, she switched to a Master of Social Work at SFSU. Gabby also holds a Pupil Personnel Services Credential from San Jose State University.

She currently works as a Behavioral Health Specialist with the Special Education Department at Mount Diablo Unified School District providing behavioral health services to students referred for assessments and individual therapy plans.

As a member of Familias Latinas, Gabby values having a space to come together to celebrate culturally important holidays, celebrate the accomplishments of members in our community, and feel generally connected to our community. Latino students represent a small percentage of students in the district (~17%). Gabby hopes this group can continue to grow in size and participation to celebrate the diversity within the Latino community here in Albany.

To continue to get to know each other and highlight the accomplishments within our community, we will feature members of our community each month. If you want to show your child how proud you are of all their effort and accomplishments, introduce yourself so you can connect with our community, share a business, service, or skill that you can offer our community, or nominate someone else to be featured in our monthly newsletter, please email Familias Latinas de Albany.



As we prepare for game night, our team was thinking about some of the games they remember playing.

Playing Trompo

by *Randolph Martinez*

When I was growing up in Nicaragua I loved playing with all sorts of toys. One of my favorite toys was the Trompo. A trompo is a short cone-like toy that is carved from wood. You can get them with a simple wooden design, or you can get them with beautiful color-coded paint and sometimes multi-colors too. Kids love playing trompo because it is exciting to get it to "dance."



School students play 'trompo arasa' with toys made by their parents from the guava tree. Caaguazú, Paraguay, 2011.

It looks like an easy game; you just wrap it around with a designated string and throw it. But for those who played trompo, it was more complicated than that. First, you have to choose the string that you are going to wrap it with. Is it brand new? What is it made of? I didn't like the brand-new strings because they didn't have the finesse of seasoned strings, but I also didn't like the old ones because they weren't tight enough to handle how tight you need it to go around the Trompo to get that perfect spin. In addition, a player would have to

learn how to throw the Trompo and when to release it. If you timed it wrong, the Trompo could go air-born and hit someone in the head or you might hit yourself.

There were also many ways to play trompo. Some children in the neighborhood would hold competitions. The loser was the person whose Trompo cracked. That meant that you had to bring two Trompos, the sturdy one would be the challenger and the pretty shiny one was the one you would wager against others. Playing Trompo wasn't always about challenging others to a duel. It was also about making it do tricks, and getting creative - like a yoyo. There is a saying in Spanish - "bailas mas que un trompo" ("you dance more than a Trompo"), which is said as a compliment or to acknowledge that you love to dance.

As an adult I display the trompos that have beautiful drawings of Nicaragua or from Mexico (I was given one from there). The Trompo display reminds me of my childhood, of the simple ways in Nicaragua, of a time when all I worried about was the next time I was going to play outside with friends. Moreover, it reminds me of my roots. So whether you want to challenge someone, make it do tricks, or display it, just make sure to know that everyone can play and to keep dancing like a Trompo.

We want to make sure we provide our community with information and resources they want and need. Please complete this [survey](#) to let us know what topics you would like us to focus on at our meetings and in our newsletter.



Lotería

by Grecia Reséndez

During Game Night, we will also be playing Lotería. A very popular game in Mexico. Lotería is similar to bingo. You have a card (*tabla*) the dealer calls out the images and players cover up the corresponding images on their card. Usually, players buy in 25 cents - \$1 per *tabla*. With some players having multiple *tablas*. Winner takes all the money. 🪙

Traditional lotería came from 15th century Italy, where it traveled to Spain. Around 1769 the Spanish brought the game to Mexico.

Initially, Lotería was played by the elite. La Lotería Mexicana grew in popularity in the 19th and 20th centuries thanks to traveling fairs known as *ferias*.



Vintage *tabla* printed on tin

Early *tablas* of Lotería had Italian Renaissance designs like *el sol* and *la luna*. Until the 19th century, the images changed depending on the social context and fashion of the time ([Amigo Energy, 2023](#)).



Current lotería version played in Mexico and U.S.

The version by Jacques, known as “Gallo de Don Clemente,” became the accepted version in Mexico. This same version spread to the United States. The *Gallo* meaning rooster is the national emblem of Jaques’ native France.

Current-day Lotería is played by people of all socioeconomic classes. It is common to use raw beans to cover up the squares. People can choose to play until a row is covered or until they complete the card. The latter type is more common.

More advanced players deal the cards fast - and if you plan to win you have to keep up. When you win you yell “LOTERIA!”



The dealer then checks their remaining cards against your *tabla*. This is to confirm you've won because if you did, none of the cards still in the deck should be on your *tabla*.

Community Events

GAME NIGHT @ AHS

Spend the afternoon playing Loteria and other great games while raising community scholarship funds

Sunday, February 26th, 1pm-5pm, Albany High School

\$5 ADMISSION DAY AT THE LAWRENCE HALL OF SCIENCE

Looking for something to do on President's day? Come enjoy a biotech lab, design and maker spaces, and live animals meetups for a special admission price.

President's Day, Monday February 20
10am to 5 p.m
Lawrence Hall of Science



BLACK JOY PARADE AND CELEBRATION

Black Joy Parade is a hyper-positive, family-friendly event to celebrate the Black experience past, present, and future. It is the largest free, family-friendly event of its kind.

Sunday, February 26
Noon - 7pm | Parade starts at 12:30pm
14th St & Franklin St, Oakland

LATINOS OUTDOOR: BLACK DIAMOND HIKE

Hike the Chaparral Loop at Black Diamond Regional Preserve. The short but exciting loop will give participants a first hand experience of the nature and geology of the Mt. Diablo foothills, and learn about the mining history of the park. RSVP Required.

Sunday, February 26, 10am
Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, Antioch

OPEN COCKPIT DAY

Get up close and personal with airplanes at Oakland's Aviation Museum.

Sunday, March 5
10am-4pm
OAKLAND AVIATION MUSEUM



CORNELL'S GOT TALENT

Come and watch the Cornell elementary students take pride in their skills ranging from athleticism, singing, dancing, comedy and more!

Sunday, March 11th
1pm Showcasing Acts from Grades K-2
5pm Showcasing Acts from Grades 3-5.
Ocean View Elementary



Community Resources

SCHOOL DISTRICT RESOURCES

Conexión Latina

High students can find community and support through this Latino student club.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Albany Disability Squad: Parent organization that advocates for the needs of students with disabilities. If your child is struggling in school, this group can help you understand what is available in AUSD and link you to community resources.

Albany's Pride: LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Group for AUSD

AUSD Student Services: responsible for student attendance, discipline, mental health, and interventions to support students' social-emotional needs. For support please email the Director of Students Services: Deb Brill at dbrill@ausdk12.org

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Family Paths: parenting stress and mental health support

ACCESS is a multilingual call center that provides information for mental health and substance use treatment for Alameda County.
24 hours a day/7 days a week
1-800-491-9099

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) East Bay: Provides resources for Alameda & Contra Costa County

FOOD PANTRIES AND SERVICES

Alameda County Social Services

Alameda County Community Food Bank

Berkeley Food Pantry

Berkeley Food Network

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Food Pantries

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Berkley Public Library offers ESL Conversation Club (on Zoom!). Come join us every Tuesday from 10:30-12:00 PST for conversation in a friendly and relaxed setting. All levels of ESL learnings are welcome to join from the comfort of your own home (family and pets are welcome too!).

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

What games do you and your family enjoy for Game Night?

Is there a community resource you would like to share with others? Are there latino/x businesses you want to recommend? Do you own a business that you want our community to know about?
If so, please email us.

