

More than a Chicano Movement newspaper,

La Cucaracha also served as a community bulletin board where mothers were honored on Mother's Day and softball teams, boxers, fishermen, hunters, folkloric dancers and Headstart kings and queens received kudos.

Milestones

November 1975 — Newspaper conference at El Centro Quinto Sol. Purpose of the conference was to start a newspaper in Pueblo and to recruit potential staff and supporters.

May 1976 — First edition
Type was set with IBM Selectric typewriters borrowed from our employers, Pueblo Manpower, and MASA (Mexican American Service Agency).

Headlines were set by a typesetting service before stories were written. Some headlines and ad copy were produced using rub-on transfer lettering.

November 1976 — In an editorial, *La Cucaracha* reported a \$55,000 grant from the Catholic Church's Campaign for Human Development to Producciones Estrella Roja (PER), the community media center and publisher of *La Cucaracha*.

December 1976 — PER purchased Frieden typesetters from Pueblo Catholic Diocese's Chronicles newspaper. It was 1950's technology, but a big step in making *La Cucaracha* look more like a newspaper.

May 1977 — Compugraphic typesetters and a vertical production camera gave *La Cucaracha* a more professional look. Now the staff was able to set type in a half-dozen fonts, sizes and could also halftone photographs, enlarge and reduce graphics.

Spring 1977 — PER received a \$77,000 Department of Labor (DOL) grant from

Pueblo Manpower Administration to hire artists to create public art in the city of Pueblo. None of those funds went to *La Cucaracha*.

Sept. 23, 1977 — the FBI and DOL served a search warrant on PER and *La Cucaracha* offices and confiscated files pertaining to the DOL grant. The allegation was that the federal funds were misspent.

January 1978 — Records taken by FBI and DOL were returned with little comment on the part of the investigation. According to DOL, spokesman, their investigation was closed, they were waiting for the FBI to close its investigation. The file cabinets containing the records were dropped off at the curb in front of the PER offices. The Feds admitted there was no wrongdoing by any of the PER staff.

July 1979 — *La Cucaracha* increased frequency from monthly to biweekly. "Beginning with this issue, *La Cucaracha* will be published every two weeks... Our aim thus far has been to provide accurate, timely information to people for use in making decisions... A constant bombardment of biased, misleading information from radio and TV stations, and newspapers can better be countered by more frequent publication of newspapers like *La Cucaracha*."

and with growing families, the staff moved on. Jose Esteban Ortega became director of the Pueblo Neighborhood Health Centers; Paul Mora was hired at the Denver Post; David Martinez became a lawyer; Juan Espinosa became director of the Pueblo Energy Resource Center and eventually was hired at The Pueblo Chieftain. Deborah Espinosa became director of El Pueblo History Museum, a state museum. Rita Martinez continued as a community activist and recognized leader of Pueblo's Cinco de Mayo Celebration for the next four decades.

Other former Cucs went on to other productive careers including Guillermo DeHerrera who was elected to the state legislature and Adams County Commissioner, Jess Vigil who became a District Court Judge in Denver and Ernie Montoya, who learned newspaper production and became owner of the Thrifty Nickel publication.

This exhibit was designed and coordinated by Juan Espinosa. David Martinez, Paul Mora, Deborah Mora Espinosa, Rita Martinez and Jose Esteban Ortega contributed valuable input.

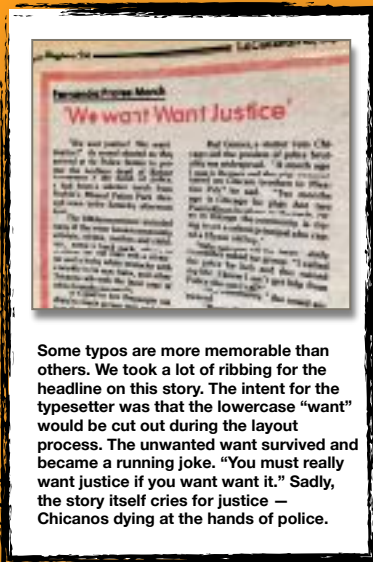
Thanks to the Colorado State University-Pueblo. Library Dean Rhonda Gonzales and Beverly Allen and Jose Antonio Ortega of the Chicano Movement Archives for having the issues of *La Cucaracha* digitized and for securing the funding for this exhibit.

Epilogue

The last *La Cucaracha* was published in November 1983, seven years and six months after the first edition. Broke



Hecho en Aztlan was a regular feature created by Cynthia Ortiz Fuentes



Some typos are more memorable than others. We took a lot of ribbing for the headline on this story. The intent for the typesetter was that the lowercase "want" would be cut out during the layout process. The unwanted want survived and became a running joke. "You must really want justice if you want want it." Sadly, the story itself cries for justice — Chicanos dying at the hands of police.

