

Interviewer: Benjamin Treotler

INTERVIEW AND TAPE SUMMARY

Name: Luis Ybarra

Date and Place of Birth: May 6th, 1957 in Granite City, IL

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone Number: [REDACTED]

Interview Date, Time, and Place: November 3rd, 2001 3pm at the Ybarra house at [REDACTED]

Interview Summary (attach additional sheets, as needed):

Luis talked about his life in Lincoln Place, as well as some family and neighborhood history. He has lived in Lincoln Place his entire life; and currently lives in the same house he was born in. When pressed, Luis spoke out against the current state of Lincoln Place and gave ideas on how to improve it, too.

Note any special circumstances involving the interview:

This took place at the Ybarra house and while we were doing the interview, ~~the~~ there were many distractions. His two young children were making lots of noise; his wife did the dishes in the next room; and a television can be heard throughout. Other distractions can also be heard.

Lincoln Place Oral History Project
Dept. of Historical Studies, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Biographical Information and Family History

Current Information

Full Name: YBARRA LUIS MANUEL
Last First Middle

Maiden Name:

Current Address:

Telephone Number: (home) (work)

Best time/way to reach: AFTER 6:00 PM

Family History

Years/dates lived in Lincoln Place: 44 yrs.

Address(es) in Lincoln Place:

Date and Place of Birth: 5-6-57 G.C.

Current Marital Status:

single [] married [☒] divorced [] widowed []

Spouse's name and place of birth: PHYLLIS L. YBARRA G.C.

Mother's name and place of birth (if known): ESTHER MUÑOZ YBARRA (MEXICO)

Father's name and place of birth (if known): SALVADOR YBARRA (MEXICO)

Children's names: SALVADOR, LUIS II

Benjamin Treutler

11/12/01

Some people would look at Luis Ybarra's life and claim that not much has happened; for he lives in the house he was born in, and has kept the first real job he has ever had for 23 years. However, it takes some deeper introspection of his life to realize that Luis is a man who, when he finds something he likes, sticks with it.

Luis Ybarra is a lifelong resident of the Lincoln Place neighborhood in Granite City, IL. He was born on May 6th, 1957 to Mexican immigrant parents who were living in Lincoln Place. Luis' father was 18 years older than his mother, so when they were married in 1951, his father had already been living in the neighborhood since 1924. His father had already been married and divorced by the time he married Luis' mother, and as a result, Luis has several half-siblings, two of which lived in the house when he was growing up.

Luis attended St. Joseph's Catholic School through the 8th grade, and then, after high school, attended SIUE to pursue a degree in Commercial Art. When he found that that major was not offered he attempted to earn a degree in Art Education. After a few semesters, Luis dropped out of college and was soon offered a job that he would find very rewarding. Another longtime Lincoln Place resident, and fellow Mexican, Johnny Valencia, offered Luis a job with the Madison County Highway department. Johnny asked that Luis stay on the job for at least a year so Johnny wouldn't be made to look bad. Luis agreed to the stipulation, and has kept the job for the 23 years since.

After starting his new job, Luis soon found another love of his life, his wife Phyllis. Phyllis grew up in nearby Madison, IL, and was living in Lincoln Place and renting from Luis' sister when they met, and in 1994, they were married. When they met, Luis was living with his brother one street over, but after they were married, Luis' father gave them his house as a wedding present. Luis and Phyllis have two young sons, and all indications point to their growing up in Lincoln Place, too.

Outside family and work, Luis is also interested in his Mexican heritage. In 1926, his father and five others founded the Mexican Honorary Commission in Lincoln Place. Luis is now a member of this club that helps promote heritage through Mexican fiestas and dances. He also enjoys authentic Mexican food, and remembers the pleasure from eating the food his mother would cook.

On the surface, it appears that Luis Ybarra's life is not very interesting. However, after closer inspection, one can see that Luis is a man that knows what he likes, and when he finds something that he likes, he sticks with it.