



# Leaving home



These Fremont High School students are all immigrants. From top left, Roberto, Miguel, Jose and Yaquelin.

## These teens remember a much harder life

The following quotes are from Fremont teenagers who are students at Fremont Senior High School. They were born in Latin America: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico and have recently come to this country. They speak of difficult experiences leaving their home countries and adjusting to life in their new home.

Like all teenagers struggling to grow up, these teens are also working hard to adapt, learning new ways and a new language. And they remember the extreme poverty and fear of violence that sent them from their homelands.

They — Roberto, Miguel, Jose, Maria, Yaquelin — speak of anger and sadness at leaving friends and other family members. (The students asked that their last names not be used.) However these students respect their parents' decision to leave to find a new home.

While each individual student is unique, they share many of the same goals for the future and experiences from the past that influenced their journey to a new home in Fremont.

### Leaving home

"I had a feeling in my heart I had never felt. What is going to happen? Will I survive? But, I will get to see my parents again after 14 years. I felt I had lost my heart and was about to cry, but I was brave."

### Traveling and fear

"When I passed from El Salvador into Guatemala, I crossed by hiding where they put the suitcases under the bus where only five people could fit. They stuck 15 kids in there. I made it, but it was difficult.

"When I got out, I walked for an hour and then crossed a river. When I got to the other side, the police stopped me and took all my money. Later that same day, I left for Mexico.

"They put me onto a trailer and I thought I was going to ride in the cab, but they put me in a box that had only a little hole to be able to breathe through. I felt like I would die because the sun was hitting me and I had only a little bit of water.

"After sleeping on the ground with no blanket and no food, we spent 13 hours riding in a trailer. The next day we rode 12 hours in a more crowded trailer. We were tired and cold but still had to walk for many more days.

"When I crossed from Mexico to the United States, they detained me and sent me to a juvenile detention center where I stayed for two months."

"Late one night, immigration found us. I ran so hard because I didn't want them to catch me since we had made such sacrifices to get here. They caught us on a hill. My whole body was scratched up and I had a lot of bruises. We had to spend many weeks in jail, but now, thank God, we're here. I hope especially after everything that's happened that everything turns out well."

"We crossed the border and walked for a long



Maria is a student at Fremont High School.

while, and then the immigration caught me and my aunt. The immigration police stuck us into jail. From there they separated us. They sent me to a juvenile center and her to an elderly center. I was there for 9 months."

### Why they came to the U.S.

"I suffered hunger, thirst and cold. I thought it was all worth it to be able to see my mom again. I came here to have a better life. I went through things that you all can't even imagine."

"I see that there is work here, but they don't want immigrants like me. I am a Guatemalan and I'm very proud to be because Guatemalans have respect, honesty and above all, we have love."

"I came from El Salvador to change my life and I succeeded and now I am with my family. I don't have my father here. I only have my mom and older brother. I hope that some day I'll be a great person and I want to work to support my mom. I would like to go to see my dad because I haven't seen him in eight years."

"Building Fremont: Immigrants 1856 to present" is a special four-week project of the Fremont Tribune, Fremont Area Art Association, United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 22 and Nebraska Is Home Fremont. It features photography by Dean Jacobs. Personal stories were compiled by Nebraska Is Home Fremont.

## Nebraska plan addresses developmentally disabled

LINCOLN (AP) — Nebraska officials are asking for help as they create a new plan that will guide how they serve those in the state with developmental disabilities.

Officials have scheduled public meetings in several communities

next month. The first will be held March 8 in Scottsbluff.

Those with developmental disabilities, their families and friends and others interested in making suggestions for the state's plan are invited to attend.

The state's current three-year plan expires in June.

The state is required by law to create the comprehensive statewide plan.

For more information, call 402-471-8714.

## McKenzie files for re-election

Tribune staff

Duane McKenzie of Nickerson filed Thursday for re-election to the Nickerson Township Board.

All township seats will be on the general election ballot in the fall.

Nickerson Township board member Myron Andrews of Fremont filed for re-election Wednesday.

The other board member is Jay Kment of Fremont.

## Clerk's office open late today

The Dodge County Clerk's Office will be open until 6 p.m. today for any voters who still need to register for the upcoming school bond issue election on March 9. Early voting also may be done at the clerk's office.

## Benefit to aid Kennard family

A chili feed for the Alan Schwedhelm family of Kennard will take place from 4-9 p.m. today at Uncle Larry's Pub in Fremont.

The Schwedhelm family lost Pamela, mother of six, in a vehicle accident in January.

Attendees to the fundraiser will receive one drink ticket with their donation and as much chili as they can eat. There also will be baked goods and a silent auction.

## Knights plan pancake feed

The Knights of Columbus pancake breakfast will be 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sunday in Delaney Hall at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Fremont.

Cost is \$4.50 for adults and \$1 for children ages 12 and under.

The menu includes pancakes, eggs, ham or sausage, toast, coffee and juice.

## Blood drive is Monday

The American Red Cross will have a blood drive from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday and 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday at Fremont City Auditorium.

To schedule an appointment, call Marilyn Ham-mang at (402) 721-6354.

## DU chapter earns honor

The President's Top 100 are among Ducks Unlimited's elite chapters throughout the nation. Every year, the list is reserved for the 100 chapters who raise the most grassroots dollars for DU's habitat conservation work.

The Burt/Washington County DU Chapter made the list as one of the organization's highest fundraising chapters.

"These fundraising events are the backbone of how DU conserves habitat and the volunteers who make up these chapters are the on-the-ground conservationists making a difference for North American waterfowl populations," said John Pope, president of DU. "It takes a lot of effort to crack the Top 100 and these chapters deserve to be congratulated from every person who enjoys the outdoors."

The Burt/Washington County Chapter has earned a spot on the President's Top 100 list out of the more than 3,500 DU Chapters nationwide. DU's grassroots system has become a model for other conservation organizations worldwide and has funded a portion of the more than 12 million acres DU has conserved

since 1937.

Ducks Unlimited is the world's largest non-profit organization dedicated to conserving North America's continually disappearing waterfowl habitats. Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 13 million acres thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent.

## FPD reports January calls

The Fremont Police Department investigated 113 crashes within the city during January.

Seventeen crashes occurred on private property. Five crashes involved one vehicle, 103 crashes involved two vehicles and five crashes involved three or more vehicles. Nineteen crashes were hit and run.

Seventeen crashes occurred on a dry road surface. Fourteen crashes occurred on a wet road surface, 81 crashes occurred on a snowy/icy road surface and one was on an unknown surface. Fourteen crashes caused injury to 20 people.

One crash involved a pedestrian and two involved a commercial truck. Nineteen citations/arrests were made due to the crashes.

The causes of the January crashes are as follows: failure to yield, 35; disregard traffic signal/sign, 3; too fast for conditions, 27; improper turn, 1; following too closely, 4; fail to keep in lane/drive off road, 2; reckless/careless driving, 3; swerving or avoiding, 2; over-correcting/steering, 2; visibility obstructed, 3; inattention, 26; mobile phone distraction, 1; distracted - other, 1; other improper action, 2; unknown, 13.

In January 2009, there were a total of 62 traffic crashes reported. Three crashes caused injury to five people.

## POLICE BEAT

### Police arrest teen after fight

Tribune staff

Fremont Police arrested a 17-year-old boy Thursday night following an altercation at a residence in the 400 block of Jefferson Road.

Lt. Kurt Bottorff said a 12-year-old boy tried to punch the 17-year-old and missed, and the 17-year-old then strangled the 12-year-old.

A 16-year-old boy also joined the altercation and kicked and punched the 12-year-old, Bottorff said.

All three were cited for third-degree assault by mutual combat.

The 17-year-old also was charged with strangulation and was transported to the Sarpy County Youth Detention Center.

### Police warn about scam

Tribune staff

Fremont Police are alerting residents to be wary of a scam.

Lt. Kurt Bottorff said the department has received at least two reports of phone calls where the caller tries to draw out the name of a relative of the person who answers the phone, then poses as that person throughout the call.

Bottorff said the caller states that he is in a dire situation outside of the state or out of the country and asks for money or debit card information.

Bottorff said people who receive such calls should not send money or give out financial information and should contact other relatives to verify the situation.