

Inez Romero Tafoya Lucero, “Grandma Lucero”

By Antonio Duran

Grandma Lucero’s parents, Juan Isidro and Delovina Romero, had one of the largest adobe houses in Dixon. It was large enough to hold dances and thus large enough to hold missionary meetings. It was during one these religious meetings that grandma’s family was converted to Protestantism and the Presbyterian Church. The Lucero family also attended these meetings and they were converted. The Romeros and Luceros were the first pioneers of the Presbyterian faith in Dixon.

Grandma’s father was musically talented—he played the violin and enjoyed singing. These musical traits can be traced through the Luceros and are seen in his grandson Amadeo’s singing and horn tooting, and his great-granddaughters Della and Irene’s gifts for playing the piano and organ. (Note: Amadeo wrote the New Mexico Spanish Anthem “Asi es Nuevo Mexico”.)

Grandma Lucero was not raised with the rest of her family. She was raised by her grandfather Phillipe Atencio and her grandmother Candelaria Atencio. Grandma’s compassion for others showed up early in her life as she cared for her grandparents until they died. When grandma was taking care of her grandmother she would set her outside to enjoy the fresh air and sunshine. As she was sitting there she would look at the fence posts and become very frightened thinking they were Indians coming to attack her. She would begin to cry and grandma would put her to bed. She also lost her hearing and would interpret things the wrong way. One day her grandson introduced a friend to her as Pedro Albino and she called him Perro Albino from then on. Phillipe had a garden by the Dixon hospital and every noon Grandma would take him his lunch. While she was there she would pick wild flowers and take them home to her grandmother.

Grandma attended a Presbyterian school in Penasco long enough to learn to read and write. (Note: Concha Durán has the many letters that “Grandma” Inez wrote to her after Concha’s family moved to Belén. They were all written on Big Chief Tablets.)

Grandma was very active in her church work and was a very loyal servant of the church. We never missed a single Sunday at church or Sunday school. Grandma and Grandpa Lucero were very cooperative with the missionaries who would come to the area. The mission would hold dinners and the first ones there with food and dishes were always grandma Lucero.