Hispanic Heritage Month 2006

Make your own piñata

An important tip before starting: This project may be very messy so either spread many newspapers all around or do it outside.

What you'll need for the Piñata body:

A big sturdy balloon (14 inches or bigger), a 10-inch bowl, old newspapers, papier-mache paste (at the bottom of this article is a recipe to make papier-mache), thin cardboard, tape, crayons or markers, tissue paper or construction paper and string or yarn.

Step One

Blow up a balloon and tie a knot at the end. Place the balloon on the 10-inch bowl for stability.

Take newspapers and tear (don't cut) into strips about 1 inch wide and about 6 inches long (tear so the strips have fairly rough edges and that helps to make a smooth overall surface).

Pour papier-mache paste into a disposable bowl and dip the newspaper strips into the paste. Then, spread them at an angle (and overlapping) onto the balloon thoroughly covering it.

Continue doing this until the balloon is completely covered with one layer of paper. It'll take up to 24 hours to dry.

Cover leftover papier-mache with saran wrap. If it dries out, add some warm water.

Step Two

After the first layer has dried, take a long piece of strong yarn or string, double it so that it is even stronger, and wrap the midpoint of the sting around the bottom of the balloon, pulling the ends up to the top. Then, tape it to the balloon in a few places and knot together the ends of the string 6 inches above the top.

Step Three

Now, with strips of paper, cover the balloon (including the string) placing the strips at a different angle from the first layer (using different colored strips lets you distinguish one layer from the next, ensuring a uniform overall thickness). Again, allow the second layer to dry.

Step Four

A third layer. Cover the balloon with newspaper strips, covering in yet another angle. You should smooth over any rough edges that might come about.

Step Five

This is where you cut a 2-inch square hole on the top. But, don't cut all four sides of the hole, only cut three sides so that it will be like a flap and you'll be able to close it later.

Step Six

Decorate however you like. Choose colors that suite your theme, add different colored tissue squares and glue them all around, add streamers, etc.

Step Seven

Make sure the inside of the piñata is completely dry before filling it. Fill it about halfway with all kinds of candy, trinkets, little gifts etc. After filling the piñata, tape the flap that was made and cover with more decorations.

Step Eight

You can hang the pinata up from the ceiling, or on a tree branch in the yard.

Each child takes a turn trying to break the pinata with a stick (a broom handle works well).

Turn the child around in a circle 2 or 3 times and point them in the direction of the piñata.

They get to swing two or three times. Make sure everyone else stands clear of the swinging. Then another kid gets a turn. When someone breaks the piñata, all the children get to gather the goodies. Often young kids can feel that this method is unfair because all of the children don't get the same amount of candy. To avoid hurt feelings, you can put aside a small bag of candy for each child with their name on it. This, will not only keep the party people happy, but will give kids a place to empty their pockets and take home their loot!

Papier-Mache Paste:

Combine 1/2 cup all-purpose flour and 2 cups cold water in a bowl. Add this mixture to a saucepan of 2 cups boiling water and bring it to a boil again.

Remove from the heat and stir in 3 tablespoons of sugar. Then, let it cool (it will thicken as it cools). Once it cools, the paste is ready for use.

— Courtesy: www.familyblueprint.org

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27th Fighter Wing Hispanic Heritage Month events

Saturday — Cooking Class at 1:30 p.m. at the Clovis Community Center.

Wednesday — Children's reading with pinata at the Youth Center.

Oct. 6 — Hispanic Heritage Month Luncheon at 11:30 a.m. at The Landing. Cost is $9.60. POCs are
FW/MSG: Senior Airman Alexis Mauldin 784-2761;
OG: Deborah Prescott 784-2703;
MXG: 1st Lt. Moroni Booth 784-7488;
MDG: Master Sgt. Vincent Phillips 784-4644.

Cannon celebrates Hispanic heritage

By Airman Thomas Trower
27th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

"Through hard work, faith in God, and a deep love of family, Hispanic Americans have pursued their dreams and contributed to the strength and vitality of our Nation. They have enriched the American experience and excelled in business, law, politics, education, community service, the arts, science and many other fields. Hispanic entrepreneurs are also helping build a better, more hopeful future for all by creating jobs across our country. The number of Hispanic-owned businesses is growing at three times the national rate and increasing numbers of Hispanic Americans own their own homes. We continue to benefit from a rich Hispanic culture and we are a stronger country because of the talent and creativity of the many Hispanic Americans who have shaped our society.

Throughout our history, Hispanic Americans have also shown their devotion to our country in their military service. Citizens of Hispanic descent have fought in every war since our founding and have taken their rightful place as heroes in our Nation's history. Today, Americans of Hispanic descent are serving in our Armed Forces with courage and honor, and their efforts are helping make America more secure and bringing freedom to people around the world." — President George W. Bush, Sept. 14.

In 1968 Congress authorized President Lyndon Johnson to proclaim a week in September as National Hispanic Heritage Week, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Later, in 1988, this observance was expanded into a monthlong celebration from Sept.15 to Oct. 15. Sept. 15 was chosen as the starting point for the celebration because it is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16 and 18.

The Cannon Cultural Observance Committee (COC) started to celebrate Hispanic culture and traditions by holding a Latin Dance Night in conjunction with the 27th Services Squadron.

There will also be a luncheon at 11:30 a.m. Oct. 6 at The Landing. Tickets are purchased prior to the event from any COC member.

Hispanics play a vital role in the everyday military operations of the United States. According to statistics from the 2003 U.S. Census, there were 1.1 million Latino veterans of the U.S. armed forces, and about 53,000 Hispanic-origin people were on active duty. Hispanic/Latinos represent 7.9 percent of the total active duty Air Force military.

Hispanic Heritage Month gives America a chance to celebrate the culture and traditions of U.S. residents who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America and the Caribbean while contributing to the United States today.

Did you know?

The Hispanic population of the U.S. is 42.7 million people, not including the 3.9 million residents of Puerto Rico.

There was a 3.3 percent increase in the Hispanic population between July 1, 2004, and July 1, 2005, making Hispanics the fastest-growing minority group.

The projected Hispanic population of the United States as of July 1, 2050 is 102.6 million.

Sixty-four percent of Hispanic-origin people in U.S. households are of Mexican background. Another approximately 10 percent are of Puerto Rican background, with about 3 percent each of Cuban, Salvadoran and Dominican origins. The remainder are of some other Central American, South American or other Hispanic or Latino origins.

Forty-nine percent of the Hispanic-origin population lives in California or Texas. California is home to 12.4 million Hispanics, and Texas is home to 7.8 million.

The following states have at least half a million Hispanic residents: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Texas and Washington.

Forty-three percent of New Mexico's population is Hispanic, the highest of any state

There were 1.6 million Hispanic-owned businesses in the U.S. in 2002.

There are 9.5 million Hispanic families who live in the United States. Of these families, 63 percent have children under 18.

Thirty-one million U.S. household residents age 5 and older speak Spanish at home.

Fifty-eight percent of Hispanics age 25 and older had at least a high school education in 2004.

Twelve percent of the Hispanic population age 25 and older held a bachelor's degree or higher in 2004.

714,000: — Number of Hispanics 25 years and older with advanced degrees in 2004 (e.g., master's, professional, doctorate).

Eleven percent of all college students in October 2004 were Hispanic.

Eighteen percent of Hispanics work in managerial, professional and related occupations.

Approximately 24 percent of Hispanics work in service occupations, 22 percent in sales and office jobs, 15 percent in construction, extraction and maintenance jobs, and 19 percent in production, transportation and material moving occupations. (The difference between the proportions working in managerial, professional and related occupations and in production, transportation and material moving occupations is not statistically significant.)

Approximately 7.6 million Hispanic citizens reported voting in the 2004 presidential election. The percentage of Hispanic citizens voting — about 47 percent — did not change from four years earlier.

There are 1.1 million Hispanic veterans of the U.S. armed forces.

— Source: AmericanFactFinder