

## **Four Generations of Fathers Span a Century in Sugar Land**

“My grandfather, Jose Morales, came to Sugar Land from central Mexico just after the Imperial company was formed, around 1908” says George Morales II, a third-generation Sugar Land father. “He’d heard there was work here. Brought his bride, Vincenta. They were both just teenagers.”

George’s own father was born at home, in the Morales’s Mayfield Park home. He too worked at Imperial and was such a valued employee that he became a salesman for Imperial –“Maybe the first Hispanic salesman,” says George. The job gave the family an opportunity to travel some.

“My dad was a go-getter, and he wanted us to have a good lifestyle” he recalls. In fact, the senior Morales held two jobs. “Yes, beside the Imperial job, my dad owned a dance hall in Stafford. It was a safe place because if anyone caused trouble, my dad made it clear he couldn’t come back.”

“We used to have dances in the back of Mayfield Park, to celebrate Mexican independence, too.”

George remembers his dad polishing the five children’s shoes for school the next day. “Oh he was very careful about how we looked. He thought that was real important.” In fact teachers at Lakeview Elementary School commented that the Morales children were the best dressed in the school.

Mr. Morales remembers his awareness as a young person that “discrimination is out there – but as for our family, it didn’t really affect us.” George remembers being able to comfortably enter any business

establishment. "I never had a problem going anywhere I needed to go – I even used to go to the ice cream shop. The company doctors, too, they would also see you. Just because you were Hispanic doesn't mean they weren't going to take care of you."

Just after he was married, and after college, he was drafted to serve in the Vietnam War. After serving, Morales returned to his family in Sugar Land and worked as an accountant at Sperry. George and his wife Mary had two children, George and Carol. George goes by Marty (from his middle name Martin) because, as he says, "My dad and granddad were always around so we didn't need a third George." Marty is a police officer with the Sugar Land Police Department. Marty and his wife Misti have a 3-year old son, George Morales IV.

From his front porch, George Morales watches the cars on Eldridge. "I remember this being a two-lane road," he says, reflecting on the changes that have occurred since. "Changes have been good. Sugar Land has grown fast, but for the good. Our roots are here. We always felt that we belonged here."

Money Magazine and CNNmoney.com rank Sugar Land as one of America's Best Places to Live.  
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