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Maria Gomez Quiroz

The Beat Goes On



Hart Days 2016

Hart Days Co-Parade Marshal Mary Gomez Quiroz Moved To Hart In 1956

Born on January 28, 1928, in Edinburg to Juan and Margaret Gomez, Maria (Mary) Gomez Quiroz was raised around farming. Her dad was a foreman for a farmer in the area. He later purchased a piece of land, she recalls.

Mary married Joe Quiroz and they came to Hart in 1955 with their two children, four year old Joe Don and three-year old Maria Teresa (Terry). They came to pull cotton bolls; however, it rained, and there was no work.

Mary said that Joe found some work with Fred Popejoy, a local farmer. They didn't stay in Hart—they found some families in the area from South Texas who were returning home. So, they went back. However, Joe wanted to return to Hart, and they came back in 1956 and he began working some for Jack Smitherman. She said they ended up staying in a house on the Jim Brooks farm. They then met up with T.C. Ray, and lived in a house owned by T.C.'s brother-in-law and sister, Perry

and Nora Van Vliet.

Joe later began working for Bob Bennett, where he stayed for two years. And, next, the family moved to a house owned by Verle Crick, who hired Joe. Mary said this was the first house in the Hart area they had lived in that had indoor plumbing. She said Joe worked for Crick about 10-12 years.

While working for Crick, Joe got sick with appendicitis and had an appendectomy. This prompted Mary to tell Joe they needed to buy a lot in Hart, which they did. She began looking for a house to put on the lot, and saw one advertised in a newspaper. The house was owned by Johnny B. Lilley. They bought the house and moved it to Hart to 805 Avenue B, where Mary continues to live. She thinks they made the move from the farm to Hart in 1957 or 1958.

After some years, Mary and Joe separated and they ceased as a couple. (He died in 1993). She later married Joe Isabel Avitia, who was shot dead in

May 1980 in front of their house, she recalls.

Mary is no stranger to work. She said to put food on the table, she worked for Smith Potato part of the year and then worked in a carrot processing facility in Dimmitt. She also cleaned houses and performed other domestic work for Hart families, including the Loyd and Augusta Farris family and the W.T. and Betty King family. She also recalls that when Marguerite McLain was injured in an automobile accident, she got a call from Marguerite's brother, Bob Bennett, who asked Mary to help take care of Marguerite.

Mary also worked at Alford's Cafe and the Green Frog Cafe. She was happy to get to the age where she could collect social security, but she continued to work some.

Her children graduated from Hart High School; Joe in 1969 and Maria in 1970. Joe Don lives in Arlington and Maria in Lubbock. Maria has a 33-year old son, David Daniel, who also lives in Lubbock.



Deryl & Joan Clevenger

Deryl And Joan Clevenger Are Hart Days Co-Parade Marshals

Deryl and Joan (pronounced Jo Ann) Clevenger have called Hart home since 1959. They moved to a farm six miles east of Hart, which they purchased in 1963. And, in 1964, they built the home they call home, located four miles east of Hart just north of TX194.

Deryl Duane was born in December 1929 in Swisher County to Jeff and Oma Reeves Clevenger. He lived in the Tulia area until he moved to Hart. He attended school at Union Hill, and then transferred to Tulia Consolidated Schools.

When asked if she has any hobbies, Maria answers, "Working." She is a member of St. John's Catholic Church.

He continued his education at Abilene Christian College, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in General Agriculture in 1951.

In Tipton Orphans' Home in Tipton, Oklahoma, Joan McCasland was growing up in the Church of Christ-supported orphanage. She was born in August 1928 to Joe and Belle Daniel McCasland in Caddo County, Oklahoma. She and two brothers were placed in the Home because things at home weren't good.

She graduated from Tipton High School in 1947 and then attended Abilene Christian College. There she met Deryl; they continued to Page 12