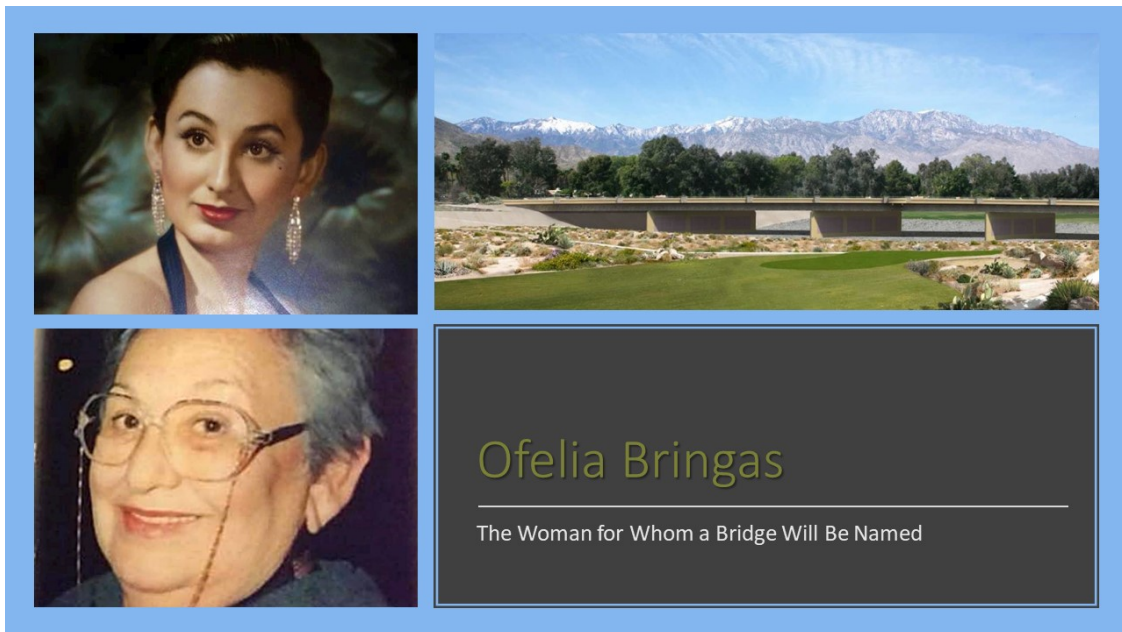


July 22, 2021

National Mango Day

Community Update

By Chris Parman, Communications & Events Manager



Construction continues on the Ofelia Bringas Memorial Bridge that will soon span the Whitewater River Basin on Cathedral Canyon Drive. Completion of the bridge is expected to occur in spring 2022. The most common question I hear from those who arrived in Cathedral City after 2006 is, “Who was Ofelia Bringas?” For those who knew her, they would reply, a “humanitarian.” For those who did not know her, you cannot conduct a simple search on Wikipedia to find out (although she should be listed). So, please allow me this opportunity to explain her significance to the community and why this new bridge will allow her legacy to be remembered for future generations to come.

Ofelia Bringas Biography:

A youth counselor who devoted her entire career bridging available resources with those in need, Ofelia Bringas was the pillar of support to thousands of families in the Coachella Valley struggling with childcare, poverty, food scarcity, and language barriers. Her focus was always on the success of the children enrolled in educational and recreational programs she directed. Ofelia Brings, also known as “Miss B” to the community, enticed the children with a multitude of activities while simultaneously instilling proper values, enhancing their self-esteem, and helping them overcome emotional inhibitions in order to transcend into productive adults.

Ofelia overcame many challenges and barriers during her own youth before rising to become a local leader and influencer. Born in Mexicali, Mexico (b. October 18, 1931), Ofelia crossed the

U.S. border at age 14 to join her father and family who lived in Los Angeles. Not speaking a word of English, she soon navigated through the immigration process, became a legal immigrant, and enrolled in public schools. All was not easy as fitting in at her new school in a new country was tough. She described her “Americanization process” as extremely difficult and one she “wouldn’t want a dog to experience.” According to her younger sister, Ofelia contracted tuberculosis at 16 and was sent to Barlow Sanitarium for nearly a year while she was being treated. When she was discharged, Ofelia spoke English proficiently. Her sisters remember her newfound interest in reading the classic novels and learning as much as she could.

Being the eldest of five daughters, Ofelia took a leadership role at home and helped care for her younger sisters. Self-determined to finish high school, Ofelia graduated at age 20 as the oldest student in her senior class. She persisted and furthered her education as she attended Los Angeles City College, California State University Los Angeles, and once she moved to Cathedral City in 1962, she attended College of the Desert too.

Ofelia began her career helping youth by working for the University of California 4-H Extension’s 4-H Open Campus at Agua Caliente Elementary School located in her neighborhood of Dream Homes. There, she put into action the principles she embraced from her education, listening to speeches about the “War on Poverty,” and the need for social justice. She knew that to change the trajectory of poor children getting involved in gangs, she needed to offer recreational and home economic activities that caught their attention while simultaneously instilling a sense of hope and opportunity. Her award-winning approach encouraged these children to succeed in school and forge on as adults into prosperous careers of their own.

The need for a bigger organization that offered a safe place for youth to learn and grow was realized when the Boys and Girls Club of Cathedral City opened in 1982. Within a few years, Ofelia became its executive director to further implement its educational and recreational programs. One of her biggest challenges was too much demand and not enough space for all the children wanting to join. The organization’s clubhouse could only occupy 80 and she needed a much bigger building for hundreds of children. Thanks to her persistent work, private and corporate donations, and a \$250,000 California Youth Advisory grant, a new gymnasium and youth center was built in 1993 on Whispering Palms Drive where the Club operates today. The new facility allowed for hundreds of children to participate in after-school and summer programs.

Ofelia Bringas continued being the executive director of the Boys and Girls Club of Cathedral City well into her early 70s, finally retiring in 2003. Her legacy of helping those disenfranchised continues as thousands of local children have grown into productive teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, and successful business owners, including her only son, Henry Bringas of Cathedral City. Ofelia Bringas died at the age of 74 on June 26, 2006.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

COVID-19 Info

Get the latest on Coronavirus Disease 2019



NEWS

Councilmember Lamb Donates Blood for the 9 Cities Challenge and You Can Too!

The 2021 Nine Cities Blood Drive Challenge has begun! Today, Councilmember Rita Lamb helped Cathedral City in reaching the goal of the highest number of blood donations in the Coachella Valley during this two-month friendly competition hosted by LifeStream. This first of three blood donation locations in Cathedral City occurred in front of Stater Bros. at the intersection Ramon ... [Read more.](#)



Nearly 62% of Cathedral City Is Vaccinated Against the Coronavirus

Keeping you and your family healthy remains key to keeping our businesses open and safe! Anyone 12 years of age and older is able to quickly, easily get the COVID-19 vaccination at a local pharmacy or medical provider. There are no more long lines or the need to drive across the county. Available vaccine locations are more likely than not ... [Read more.](#)

EVENTS

First Fridays Art Walk on Perez Road

Looking for an opportunity to walk and view some amazing art at the same time? Then come wearing your face mask and social distance at the First Fridays Art Walk on Perez



Road from 5 pm to 8 pm. The nine art galleries are located at 68845 & 68895 Perez Road in the “H” and “I” buildings. [Read more.](#)



Halloween Spooktacular

Cathedral City’s Halloween Spooktacular features trick or treating with over 40,000 pieces of candy! Join friends, neighbors, and family for a Spooktacular time including activities such as Halloween costume contests (two bikes given away each hour), police and fire exhibitions, music, and family games. Presented by Crockett Law Group and sponsored by the City of Cathedral City, Cathedral City ... [Read more.](#)



7th Annual Cathedral City Hot Air Balloon Festival and Food Truck Fiesta

Get the cameras ready for the festival that offers the best selfies. Agua Caliente Casinos present the 7th Annual Cathedral City Hot Air Balloon Festival and Food Truck Fiesta on November 19-21, 2021 featuring nearly 30 hot air balloons, balloon rides, two balloon glows, and three morning balloon launches seen throughout the Coachella Valley. Attendees will capture the beauty of ... [Read more.](#)



For Questions or Comments, Contact Chris Parman, Communications and Events Manager
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