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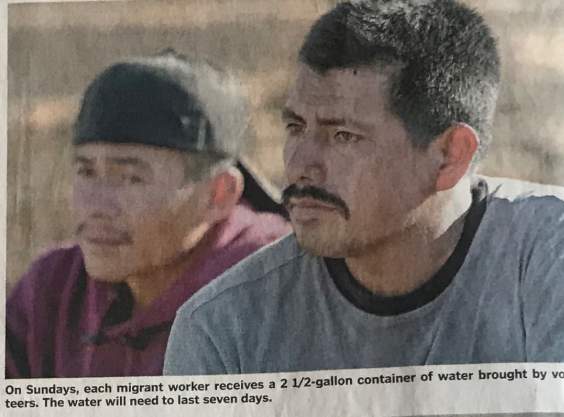
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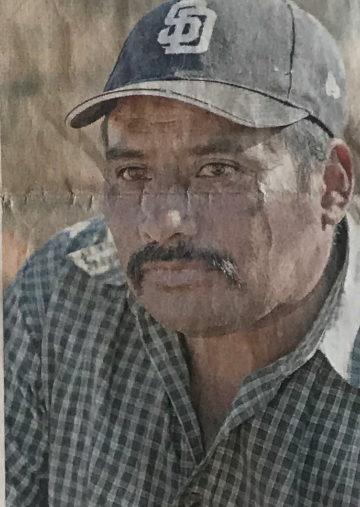
Migrant workers walk away on a recent Sunday afternoon with bare necessities such as toilet paper and water provided by volunteers.

Help
 >From A1
 of the border.
 Miguel Legaria, who has been a migrant farmworker in North County since 1985, considers himself lucky because his employer allows him to sleep in a spare trailer.
 "The hardest part is being away from my family. They don't think much of it, of my absence, because they know it's a necessity," Legaria said in Spanish through Monica.
 Misael Lopez, a migrant worker in his mid-20s, squatted on a pile of dirt. He shoveled peaches into his parched mouth and told Monica that sometimes he wonders what his family is doing back in Mexico.
 "There are just so few jobs in my country, so little money," he said, his eyes blank and focused on rubbing his calloused hands.
 Monica nodded.
 "I gave these guys my cell number just in case immigration evicts them and they can't get into a shelter," she said.
 Both Monica and Victor believe that the rest of the North County Latino community needs to "step up."
 "The thing is, it's all Caucasian Americans out here helping these guys," said Victor.



On Sundays, each migrant worker receives a 2 1/2-gallon container of water brought by volunteers. The water will need to last seven days.

"It's kind of embarrassing. We Latinos should be helping our own people."
 Monica attributes the lack of Latino volunteers to low income levels in North County. She wonders, too, if there is a certain level of competition among those Latinos who have "made it" in the U.S. and those who are illegal immigrants.
 Rigo Reyes is the border operation director for Los Niños, a nonprofit founded in 1974 that provides community development along the Mexican/U.S. border. Los Niños brings education and food to about 50,000 people a year residing in Mexico so they won't feel compelled to cross the border.
 "In a sense, we do what volunteers in Carlsbad are doing, but just in Mexico," he said.
 Maria Balman is a real estate agent and member of the Escondido Chamber of Commerce. She is the "only real contact the chamber has with the Mexican population in Escondido," according to Les Abshire, chairman of the board. Balman was born in Mexico but has been living in the U.S. for more than half a century.
 She is "appalled" that politicians are using immigration to push their various political agendas right now. "America is a wonderful, kind country but is behaving un-Christian-ly," she said.
 "I do see some positive," she said while eating lunch with her daughter, who is studying political science at the Uni-



Miguel Legaria, a migrant worker, has been living a transient life in the U.S. since 1985. He sleeps in a trailer provided by his employer and sees his family in Mexico a few times a year.

versity of California Berkeley. "We are seeing awareness in students and young people. The schools and churches in Escondido have shown a lot of interest in helping the Hispanic community learn English. A lot of what my real estate office

focuses on is helping Hispanic people buy homes."
 Jill Weigt, an assistant professor of sociology at Cal State San Marcos, has been teaching a course called Families in Poverty for the past four years. This semester she had 38 students in her class, a third of whom she said were Latino.
 "Monica was one of three or four of my students who chose to help with the migrant worker project," she said. "She is a very energetic and engaged student. This was a real-world experience for her that she really related to."
 "We're volunteers, we're just poor students," Monica said. "It's not that they're immigrants, it's that they're human beings. They need our help."

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LOCAL
 By "Action" Jack McClelland
Jack in the Blog

Rememberin

I'm blue about Red — Red Buttons.
 He died last week at age 88.
 The actor's 2002 "command performance" at California Center of the Arts, Escondido is a treasured memory of mine. He sang, danced, told stories and jokes that stirred the audience into giving him three standing ovations.
 I spent an hour with the Academy Award and Golden Globe winner on my Oceanside radio show a few weeks after his North County performance.

Buttons had nothing to gain from being on my show. He had no shows or books to promote. I never met him prior to the interview. He appeared on my show for one reason — he was a kind man.
 Here are excerpts from that interview:
Is Red Buttons your real name? (His real name was Aaron Chwatt.)
 No, my real name is Helen Hayes.

Do you live in Beverly Hills?
 No, Bel-Air. We send care packages to people in Beverly Hills during the holidays.

How do you get an audience to give you a standing ovation?
 I get an elderly crowd. They really can't sit too long, so they jump up from their seats. It looks like a standing ovation but it's a physical thing.

How did you come up with the Red Buttons (come-dy) style?
 If you hang around long enough you develop something. Some people get arthritis, others get mumps. Me, I got a style.

Did you begin your career in Vaudeville?
 No, it started on my kitchen table. If anyone walked into the house, I'd jump up ... and start singing.

Who were your idols when you were growing up?
 My father, 'cuz he'd like singing on the kitchen table.

Were you funny as a child?
 I got a lot of laughs at school.

You won an Academy Award for (Best Supporting Actor with

