

### EAGLES *FOOTBALL* GRIDIRON NEWS

#### The Mendoza Brothers

#### A Band of Gridiron Tradition

By: Conrado Perez, Jr. – Eagle Pass Sports Central

“Your best and only source for local sports news in Eagle Pass”

Throughout its 72 year storied history venerable and historic Old Eagle Football Field saw hundreds upon hundreds of former local youths nourish its hallowed turf with the blood, sweat and tears of joy from all of those former players that had the privilege and honor of playing on that historic football field.

Throughout its history several sets of siblings have played the grand old game of Texas high school football at that stadium donning the Eagle Pass Eagles football uniform including among them the Slaughter brothers Bobby and Mike, the Turnbow brothers Jimmy and Jerry, the Olivas brothers Rogelio and Victor, the Rodrigues brothers Rudy Pete and David Pete, the Acosta brothers Ronnie and Danny, the Vera brothers Orlando and Rodolfo, the Mancha brothers from Quemado Juan, Jesus, Frankie and George, the Iracheta brothers Juan Jose and Cesar, the Olivares brothers Adolfo (Fito) and Jesus (Chuy), the Crosby brothers, Juan and

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Mario Jaime, the Mejia brothers Francisco, Jesus and Juan “Chuco”, the Garza brothers Abel and Alvaro, the Hobbs brothers Clyde and Curtis, the Villasenor brothers Rene, Eric and Oscar II, the Gonzalez brothers Rudy and Tom, the Charles brothers Rolando, David and Xavier the Garcia brothers Christian, Jerry and Tommy as well as several others.

But no family has had more offspring play on that historic stadium turf than the family of Julio and Guadalupe Mendoza the famed talented and athletic Mendoza brothers of Hidalgo St, who had a total of six siblings play on that historic field including Belisario Alfonso, Jose Rolando, Luis Enrique, Carlos T., Victor Manuel and Mario Alberto.

The oldest of the Mendoza brothers Benito Julio unfortunately however endured the consequences of being the oldest sibling of the family and was not permitted to play football due to the fact that he had to work since a very early age to help support the family but did get to perform on the turf of historic Eagle Field as a proud member of the mighty Eagle band. Noelia the only girl and the youngest member of the Mendoza family obviously did not play football but rest assure she was present on Friday nights at venerable Eagle Field as a proud member of the Pep Squad and proudly supporting her talented siblings as well as her future husband Albert Garcia and cheering for her beloved Eagle Pass Eagles.

Besides performing on the playing field where the Mendoza brothers were well known for giving 110% effort every single play of the entire game five of these siblings of the Mendoza brothers also proudly and bravely served defending our beloved country in the U.S. Army during the time of war with Benito Julio, Belisario Alfonso and Jose Rolando serving during the Vietnam War while Luis Enrique and Carlos served during the Persian Gulf War during Desert Storm and Desert Shield.

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Eagle Pass Sports Central congratulates the talented and athletic Mendoza brothers for their respective outstanding accomplishments on the gridiron and other sporting venues during your respective high school careers at Eagle Pass High School and we sincerely thank each of you for being excellent role models for the youth of our community and commend each of you for representing Eagle Pass High School as well as the City of Eagle Pass, Texas with pride, dignity and class both on and off the playing field and for your devotion, dedication, sacrifice and service in defending our beloved country and we certainly wish each of you continued success in all of your respective future endeavors. Once an Eagle always an Eagle!

The following info provided by Coach Mario A. Mendoza:

Benito Julio Mendoza

I played in the band playing both the trumpet and tuba went to state in tuba Sang in the high school choir. Bass voice also went to state. Sang solo in H.S. Song: Danny Boy

Ran cross country track. I could have been pretty good. I was in Boys Scouts achieving the rank of 1st class.

Due to being the oldest, I was not allowed to participate in activities instead was always working. I worked at Eagle Pass Rexall Drug Co. delivering drugs, worked in the fields. I also

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shined shoes, worked at Riskind's and H-E-B. I graduated in 1967 and enlisted in the Army for 3 years.

Born on June 3, 1948 in Eagle Pass, Texas to Julio and Guadalupe Mendoza,.

I married Clementine Burkhart on January 29, 1972. Have 3 children Julio Jr. – LTC, Frederico (Freddy), Raul-Silvia Angelica. We have six grand children Donovan, Drew, Nathan, Braydon, Hadley and Harper. I received my Basic Training in Fort Polk. LA. Then to Fort Gordon- Korea during the Pueblo Crisis-NCO academy in Fort Hood and then got orders to go to Vietnam with Special Forces and jump school. Retired from the military on June 30, 1992

22 years as a 1SG – retired from the Post Office in June 2014 after 20 years of service.

I reside in Converse, Texas.

Belisario Alfonso (Poncho) Mendoza

I played football all 4 years, Jersey #74 for 2 years on Varsity. His position was linebacker and offensive tackle. I played basketball for 4 years Varsity two years maybe Jersey #23. Baseball 2 years played 1st base JV, jersey #3. I competed in Track and Field in 9th grade. He was elected the Pep Squad sweetheart in his senior year 1968.

I was married on Feb. 14, 1970 to my beautiful high school sweetheart Margaret "Rosie" Rossi who was my sweetheart since 9th grade. After being married for only 1 month he was drafted on April 1, 1970 into U.S. Army and received his Basic training in Fort Lewis Washington, followed with Advance Infantry Training to Fort Knox, Kentucky with orders to Vietnam. I was assigned to 23rd Infantry Division 11th Light Infantry Brigade. On his tour of service he was assigned to I corp. in Duc Pho, LZ San Juan Hill, Chu Lai LZ Professional, I asked Poncho what LZ meant. (Landing zone) and Khe Sanh and Vanderpool. I served in Vietnam Sept. 1970- Sept. 71. I returned to be assigned to Fort Hood Texas for short time of 3 months. Served 18 months total. I returned home to be employed by Hicks Ponder Manufacture Company. Had one son Jaime Alfonso born in 1973 in Eagle Pass, Texas.

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I then moved to San Antonio, Texas to be employed by S.M.T. Freight lines in 1976. Had a 2nd son Richard Alex born in San Antonio, Texas in 1978. Later was employed by Express Carriers. After being laid off from Express Carriers in 2008 he was employed through NAF to work for the Fisher House at Fort Sam Houston and is still employed there to this date July 13. 2019. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and serves as Grand Knight for Council 7386 St. Thomas More. Poncho served as a baseball and football coach to many young children through St. Thomas More C.Y.O, Camelot Little League, S.A. Northeast Mustangs. He loves to follow his children and grandchildren with all of their activities. He is very proud to have 5 beautiful, smart and well behaved grandchildren. (well for the most part anyway) 2 grandsons Cade and Caleb and 3 grand daughters Austin Elizabeth, Abby Kate and Mackinsey O'Kelly Mendoza. He is blessed to have 2 terrific daughters in law, Maria Copeland and Lucinda Carroll how are the mothers of our beautiful 5 grandchildren.

Jose Rolando (Roly) Mendoza

Was brought into this world by a midwife who happened to be my Grandmother on January 14, 1951 at 1448 Williams St. in Eagle Pass, TX, I went to grade school Webster Elementary then to Graves Elementary, then to Junior High and finished at Eagle Pass High School graduating on 1969. I played sports in High School, 3 years Varsity Football as a starter (Fullback on Offense and Corner back on Defense), on my Senior Year was selected All District 1st Team Corner Back on Defense and All District 2nd Team Fullback on Offense, wore number 23 also played baseball, started as a 4 Year Letterman, was selected 2nd Team All District, wore number 7).

Also my Senior Year was selected Most Popular and was awarded a plague for Who's Who in Sports. After graduation when to Southwest Jr. College in Uvalde, TX but had to put my

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education on hold due to Uncle Sam's Draft, was Drafted into the US Army, was flown from San Antonio, TX to Fort Polk, La for Basic Training, once I completed Basic I was flown to Ft Lewis, WA. for my next Duty Assignment, was there for 2 months and then got orders to go to the Republic of South Vietnam Cam Rahm Bay, then flew out on a C130 to Quang Tri to Hue ( Camp Eagle) to Phu Bai to Bien Hoa where I was station for 6 months with the 101st Airborne Division, then on to the World, arrived at Fort Campbell, KY but only for a few days and then on to the US Military Academy at West Point, NY for 5 months, then back to Ft Campbell, KY and was discharged on Dec 1972. Worked in Eagle Pass, TX for a few months and then went to Texas A&I but did not like it and moved to San Antonio, TX and started working in the Freight Business on 1974 till 2016 when I retired. Along the way I met my Beautiful Wife Mary Rose and got married in Dec 10 1976, so far we have been together for 43 wonderful years that I had to endure. This is my Life History.

Luis Enrique (Kike) Mendoza, I was born July 30, 1954, attended Eagle Pass ISD schools graduating in 1972. Worked for Alta Verde meat packing then worked for Texas Department of Corrections from 1978 to 1980 when I applied to the Texas Department of Public Safety from May 1980 to 1986.

I entered military service in December 1986 to November 1997. Duty stations included Ft. Bliss in El Paso, Texas. Mainz, Germany, Ft. Carson in Colorado Springs, Colorado and Schofield barracks , Hawaii. I participated in both Desert Storm & Desert Shield. Presently work for the United States Postal Service since 2000. Married Adelina Muzquiz, divorced and had three boys: Luis Enrique Jr, Marco Antonio, and Orlando Javier Mendoza. Luis Jr. is married to Nancy Garcia from Nueva Rosita Mexico and Orlando is married to Lauren Gale from Wimberley Texas. Marco is presently with the U.S. Marines. Accolades from school included (72) playing football was a offensive lineman and a defensive line backer. In baseball was a catcher, was named All-District first team. Attended Ranger Jr. College on a baseball scholarship from 1972 to 1974 and being named to the Dean's List.

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Carlos T. Mendoza I was born on October 20, 1955 and raised in Eagle Pass, Texas. During my elementary years, I attend Graves Elementary and Kennedy Hall, then attended Eagle Pass Junior Hall where I graduated and walked under the railroad tracks to attend the old Eagle Pass High School.

The Class of 74 was the last class to graduate from the old high school and the first class to graduate from the new/current Eagle Pass High School. My brothers and I were very active and excelled in many sports during the school year and during the summer. During high school I wore the #31, I played Defensive Cornerback and was a 4-year starter. My senior I was selected to the 1<sup>st</sup> Team as Unanimous All District. I also played 4 years of basketball. I also ran track until my Junior year. I didn't play high school baseball due to me working as a butcher at the local Munoz Grocery Store. After High School during the evenings I play flag football as The running back for the Wild Bunch, with some of my brothers on the city league. We won the city league and then traveled to Corpus Christi where we won the area championship. Winning the C.C. championship allowed me to play for the state championship in Amarillo, Texas. My enlistment into the Army kept me from playing for the state championship. After high school, I also worked at the Hicks Ponder Manufacturing Company was some of my brothers worked too. I worked until the end of November as I departed to start my military career on December 3, 1974.

My career started during the Vietnam era, which first took me to Fort Polk, Louisiana where I took Basic Combat Training. After basic training I was assigned Fort Jackson South Carolina, for my basic electronic training. From Fort Jackson my next assignment took me to Fort Gordon, Georgia where I took my Advanced Individual Training to learn my Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). After completing my MOS training my next orders were to report to the HHC 141<sup>st</sup> Signal Battalion in Ansbach, West Germany, and 123<sup>rd</sup> Signal Battalion in Furth, West Germany, Jun 75 to Dec 77.

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Left West Germany with orders to report to Fort Carson, Colorado, Jan. 78 to Jan, 79. Orders came in with instructions to report to Brunssum, Netherlands where I was processed for assignment to a NATO base AFCCE, Birkenfeld, West Germany, Feb 79 to 82. Mellisa Michelle was born on Nov. 80. New orders received to go back to USA and report to Fort Hood, Texas, where April Ranae was born July 83, with a 6 month of special assignment with 161<sup>st</sup> Communications Security Detachment in Honduras, where I spent 2 months living the streets of Comayagua, Honduras.

Returning to Fort Hood was sent for special training in Sheppard Air Base before deploying for 3 years USAISC in West Berlin, 84 to 87. Received new orders for assignment to Fort Bliss, TX in El Paso where the twins were born Roberto Carlos and Juan Carlos. 87 to 89. During my assignment in El Paso I received special assignment to the Allied Student Battalion (took care of 27 countries). On to my next assignment to HHC 34<sup>th</sup> Signal Battalion 93<sup>rd</sup> Signal Brigade, Heidlbronn, Germany. 89 to 91. During that assignment, our unit was deployed to the 1<sup>st</sup>

Persian Gulf War, Dessert Strom and Dessert Shield. Deactivated the unit and received orders to Fort Gordon, Georgia where

I ended my career as an instructor at one of the communication schools. 91 to Dec 94. Retired as a SSG after 20 years of service Dec. 1974 to 1994. I married my high school sweetheart Lety Garcia. We have been married for 41 years but count the 4 years of dating, totaling 45 years. We have 4 children Mellisa Michelle Tweedie Mendoza, April Ranae Mendoza, Roberto Carlos and Juan Carlos, one son-in-law Alistair Tweedie and 2 beautiful grandsons, Mathew Robert Soto and Mercer Gloriano Alejandro Tweedie Mendoza. I am still working as Lead Service Engineer for CBRE, Inc. I have 6 brothers and 1 sister.

Victor Manuel Mendoza



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I went to Eagle Pass High School from 1972-1975. I graduated in 1975. After graduation I stay in Eagle Pass and started working at Hicks Ponder for 3 years. Then I moved to San Antonio and started working for SMT Lines in January 1979 until June 1995. In August of 1995 I started working for Express Carriers until 2009. At SMT I started working in the dock and loading and unloading trailer. In 1982 I moved up into the dispatch office and did that until December 2014 with the other employer. In May of 2009 I started working at JTM Transport until December 2014. In 2015 of January I worked WFE Service until December 2015. January 2016 I worked with Matrix Service until May 2015. In June I started working with Zachry Industries until now. I am still working and I do intend to retire soon. In November 1979 I married my girlfriend Mary Helen Sandoval which now we have 3 children Victor Manuel Jr., Lori Lee & Jose Rolando. I have 5 Grandkids, Alfred Manuel IV, Ariana Mary, Ava Mckeyla De Leon, Kyraun Alexander Mendoza and Jose Rolando Jr. Mendoza. In High School (#50) I played and was a 2 year lettermen. Was selected to the 2<sup>nd</sup> team all district Middle Linebacker my junior year and Honorable Mention Middle Linebacker my senior year. I was also the Kicker. I built my home in Selma, Texas in 1995 which I still live in. I was born in Eagle Pass, Texas on July 4, 1957 and I am the 6<sup>th</sup> oldest of eight siblings in the Julio and Guadalupe Mendoza Family.

Mario Alberto Mendoza

Born April 1, 1960 to Julio & Guadalupe Mendoza and was raised in Eagle Pass, Texas. I am the youngest of 7 boys as well as the 7th child of 8 siblings. Attended Kennedy Hall Elementary and Eagle Pass Jr. High. Graduated in 1978 from Eagle Pass High School and continued my education and athletic career on a baseball scholarship at Texas Southmost Jr. College 1978 in Brownsville, Texas.

I transferred to Panhandle State University in Goodwell, Oklahoma in January 1979 on a football and baseball scholarship. In High School I played football and baseball. Was a 3 year lettermen (1975-76-77) #40 in Football as a RB, LB & Kicker. All District honors all 3 years. Lettered for 3 years in baseball (1976-77-78 ) #13 as a left-fielder and all district all 3 years. At

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PSU was a 4 year starter as LB,DL & Kicker for the Aggies ( 1979-80-81-82) 2nd in tackles sophomore year- National Playoffs and ended ranked 5th nationally junior year & senior year instrumental in the #1 defense in the nation. Played and started for 2 years in baseball as a Leftfielder. Program dropped after sophomore year.

I am a member of the Class of 2014 at Oklahoma Panhandle State Hall of Fame. I married Ranae Lynne Taylor on July 19, 1986. We have 2 sons and a beautiful daughter in law, Mario Albert Mendoza II and Matthew Joseph and wife Conner Danae Kent. I coached at PSU for 4 years, Worked as a salesman for 2 years and then got into coaching again 33 total years. I was on the coaching staff of two state football championship teams and two state runner ups. Reside in Turpin, Oklahoma.

Noelia M. Garcia

#8 came into this world on May 11, 1962. Finally my Dad got his baby girl or who knows how many more Mendoza boys there would've been. Being raised with seven, yes seven brothers!! I grew up liking the world of sports since we only had one TV. Dallas Cowboys our favorite football team. I attended Kennedy Hall and Glass Elementary. I was not allowed to participate in sports, so I had to join the Brownies and Girl Scouts. And being the only girl my mother was overprotective and took a job at the Glass Elementary cafeteria to keep an eye on me. In 1974 I started middle school at Eagle Pass Junior High and my mom followed me again.

No sports allowed. Eagle Pass High School "Class of 1980" Started my freshman year in 1977 and again my Mother transferred to High School cafeteria LOL. I lettered 4 years in Pep Squad, since I was not allowed to try out for Cheerleading. I spent 2 years watching my brother Mario

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“Superstar” playing sports. Once he graduated and I was alone in High School I met my high school sweetheart Albert Garcia, and boy was he in for a surprise not realizing I had seven brothers, Mario being one of them. Albert also played football, baseball and track. On a side note he was chosen and given the award for Who’s Who in Athletics. After graduating

I remained in Eagle Pass and worked at HEB and First Savings. On July 27, 1985 I married my High School Sweetheart and moved to San Antonio. Two years later Albert took a job in Dallas where we resided for 14 years. We moved back to San Antonio in 1999, Albert took a job in San Antonio, to be closer to family and friends. We have two beautiful daughters, Alexandra Bianca Garcia-Molina born June 6, 1988 and Anna Cristina Garcia born April 25, 1994. Bianca is married to our son in law Jorge Molina and they blessed us with our beautiful granddaughter Eliana Bianca Molina. I have worked in the Roofing Industry for 30+ years where I have worked my way up to management and continue to present day. My favorite pastime is spending time with my beautiful mom, daughters and grand baby and my wonderful husband.