

*Maria
Silva*



Maria's Life Story



Maria Silva was a woman of such incredible strength, beauty, and grace, who worked so hard for the life she enjoyed, and the family she loved. She was a devoted wife, loving mother and grandmother, and a hardworking woman all her life. Most of all, Maria was a beautiful light in the life of all who knew her.

Maria's story began on a warm New Year's Eve in 1927, as the calendar was about to turn in Weslaco, Texas, not far from the Mexican border. Those were such exciting times in this country, as the Roaring 20s enjoyed their heyday, the calm before the storm of the Great Depression struck America. On New Year's Eve that year, Pedro and Santos (Marroquin) Ybarra had more to celebrate than the coming year, but also the birth of a beautiful baby girl, a daughter they named Maria.

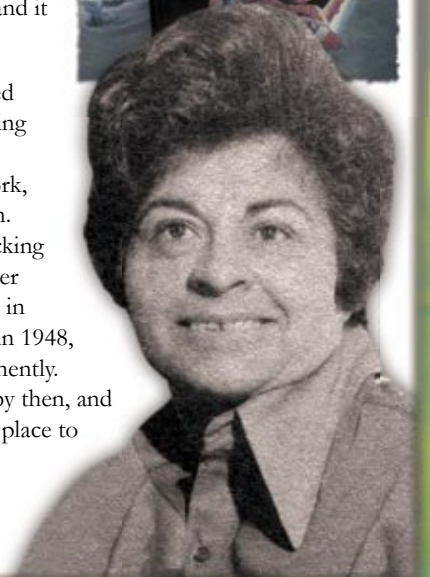
Maria was one of several children in the Ybarra home, where she learned her powerful work ethic from a young age. Her parents were migrant workers in Texas, and as a child Maria toiled alongside her family in the fields, picking cotton. She attended school through the eighth grade, when she went to work full-time to help her family, in those tough times following the Depression.

She found more than a steady paycheck in those fields, however. She also found the love of her life one day - or rather, he found her! One day Maria was working in the fields, and a handsome young boy named Jose Silva spotted her. Summoning his courage, Jose went up to talk to the ravishing Maria, calling her a "pretty woman." Jose's compliments charmed her, and it wasn't long before the teenagers fell in love and got married.



The happy young newlyweds worked in the Texas fields together, and being industrious, in the summer months they headed north to find more work, landing in lovely Holland, Michigan. There they spent their summers picking blueberries, cherries, and many other fruits and vegetables, too. They fell in love with the charming town, and in 1948, they decided to move there permanently. They were both in their early 20s by then, and thought Holland would be a good place to begin raising their family.

Once in Holland, they wasted little time, too. Before they knew



it, they were the proud parents of seven wonderful children, Andres, Maria, Violanda, Jose, Connie, Lucy, and Oralia, who filled their lives with such happiness over the years.

Being the hardworking woman she was, Maria also worked outside the home her whole life, many years at Kent-Holland Die Casting Company, where she retired from in 1986. As hard as she worked, she always found time for her beloved family, however.

Maria was a stern but unconditionally loving mother, who supported her children and kept them on the straight and narrow. If one of them got out of line, she'd use her trademark pinch to put them in place! In the rare instance when that wasn't enough, Maria would utter the fearsome phrase, "Wait until your father gets home!"

Usually, Maria could keep the kids in line, and she also instilled in them her own powerful work ethic, too. Each of her children worked in the fields picking blueberries when they were young, to earn their spending cash. Maria let them spend their money on whatever they wanted, or to go to the fair in the summertime.

One thing the children weren't allowed to do, though, was be in the kitchen when Maria was cooking! She was an exceptionally clean woman, and an incredible cook, and didn't want their hair in the food! That's the way

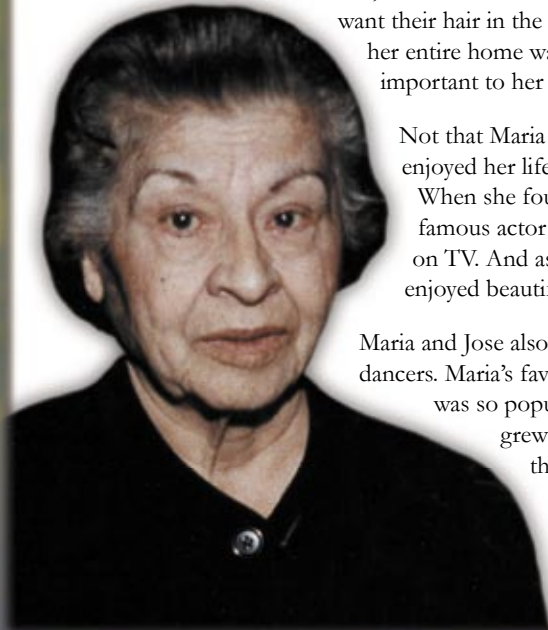
her entire home was, though; not a hair out of place. This was very, very important to her always.

Not that Maria was all work and no play, however. She was a woman who enjoyed her life, and had many different loves - especially John Wayne!

When she found free time, she loved to watch anything with that famous actor in it. In her later years, she settled for the Golden Girls on TV. And as immaculate as her home was on the inside, Maria also enjoyed beautifying the yard, and had a lovely garden, as well.

Maria and Jose also loved to dance, and were both incredibly talented dancers. Maria's favorite music was Norteno, a genre of Mexican music that was so popular in northern Mexico, near the Texas town where she grew up. She could dance the night away to the sounds of those accordions and 12-string guitars. And she often did.

Most of all, of course, Maria loved her family, with the unconditional love of a mother and grandmother, never asking for anything in return. Her grandchildren got the



same “tough love” she gave to her children, though. She was always telling them to pick up this or that, and if they left the door open, Maria would always say, “Well, are you in, or out?”

Sadly, Maria’s beloved Jose died in 1986, the same year she retired. She persevered, through her own inner strength, and the love of her family. She loved to travel to visit them wherever they were, whether it was in Chicago, Texas, or even Mexico. She also relied on her faith, and was a longtime member of the St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church.

Sadly, Maria died Wednesday, January 24, 2007 at her home, at the age of 79.



Maria was a beautiful, caring woman, a hardworking lady of such great love and character. She was a “pretty woman,” as her husband always said. Yet to everyone who knew her, Maria proved her true beauty was so much more than skin deep. She will be greatly missed.

Surviving are her children-Andres Garza of Muskegon, Maria Quintanilla and fiancé Joe Rosales of Holland, Violanda (Keata) and Charles Pridgen of West Monroe, LA, Jose Silva Jr. of Holland, Connie and Terry James of Holland, Lucy Sanchez and fiancé Mayo Silva of Holland, and Oralia (Lolly) and Leo Conejo of Brownsville, TX; 16 grandchildren and 33 great grandchildren; brother and sisters-Noe and Linda Ybarra of Ludington, Fela Mendoza of Okolona, MS, and Ramona and Juan Rios of Austin, TX; in-laws-Juan Silva of Holland, Frances Ybarra of Holland, Corina Ybarra of Katy, TX, Josie Silva of Holland, Lupe Silva of Holland, and Frances Silva of Phoenix, AZ; nephews, nieces, and cousins. Services will be 10:30 am Monday at the St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, 284 Maple Ave., with the Rev. Charles Brown officiating. Burial will be in the Pilgrim Home Cemetery. Visiting will be 2-4 and 7-9 pm Sunday at the Northwood Chapel-Dykstra Life Story Funeral Homes, 295 Douglas Ave. Memorials may be made to ones choice. To share a memory or photo of Maria, or sign the guestbook, please visit her Memory Page at www.lifestorynet.com.



Visit www.lifestorynet.com to connect with your friends and family, share stories, and sign the guestbook. Life Story Funeral Homes® are the exclusive providers of the Life Story Experience™.

Finally, there is a funeral home worth asking for.