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Corpus Christi’s Oldest Social and Civic Club for Hispanic High School Girls Donates Historical Materials to the University

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The Hi-Fairnessee Girls Club, Corpus Christi’s oldest social and civic club for Hispanic high school girls, donated 80 years of its historical materials to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi during a ceremony held today (Wednesday, Aug. 10) in the Mary and Jeff Bell Library.

The documents assembled by Hi-Fairnessee alumna Terri Longoria were donated to the Library’s permanent holdings of the Special Collections & Archives Department. The materials include photographs, newspaper clippings, typed memoirs of early club members, proclamations, invitations, correspondence, annual books the club produced chronicling its yearly events, and other historical documents.

“Back when the club was formed in the 1930s, such an educational attainment was rare in the local Hispanic community,” said Hi-Fairnessee alumna Terri Longoria. “Many of these girls became leaders in business, the professions, and governmental affairs of Corpus Christi. The Hi-Fairnessee Girls Club has likewise developed into an organization that emphasizes community outreach and civic activity.”

According to Dr. Thomas H. Kreneck, head of the Special Collections & Archives, these records provide a valuable research resource on the history of Mexican American women and their clubs in Corpus Christi. Kreneck conducted a series of oral history interviews with club members from the 1930s until the present.

“I have long sought to document the Hi-Fairnessee Girls Club because of its role as one of the most historic groups in Corpus Christi,” said Kreneck. “These records illustrate how the club members comprise much of the fabric of the Corpus Christi Hispanic community. By
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generously donating their documents to the University, the club has made a solid contribution to understanding the aspirations of young Hispanic women over the past eight decades.”

Founded in 1931 by a group of Corpus Christi High School (now Roy Miller High School) students, the club focused on its members pursuing a high school diploma and experiencing a wholesome social environment. Membership came through invitation only. The term Hi-Fairnessee derives from an old English word meaning “friendly.” The club has had approximately 2,000 members since its beginning and has included girls from all Corpus Christi high schools and the surrounding metropolitan region.

-A&M-Corpus Christi-