

DeLuna Tape #007 & Tape #008

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:03:51

JSL: Would you just tell me your name for, you know, just so we have a record of it. Where you were born. Where you've lived. Those sorts of things.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:04:28

YO: O.k. My name is Yolanda Ortiz. And I live on 3706 Woodstone, Corpus Christi Texas.

JSL: And how long have you lived in Corpus?

YO: All my life.

JSL: And were interested in knowing about a place that operated here in Corpus Christi in the 1970's and 1980's called the Casino Club. Can you tell me did you have some connection to The Casino Club?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:05:50

YO: Yes, we owned the club.

JSL: O.k. well tell me about The Casino Club. Everything you can think about it. Remember when it started approximately. And how long you had it?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:06:53

YO: O.k. The Casino Club was started in the early 70's and it was a Tejano club, and it was a, music was big, a DJ, and we had Top 40 music too. And it was a place where the young generation

was mostly in there. You know, younger kids, real popular and it was a place that everybody hanged out.

JSL: Where was it located?

YO: It was on 1001 South Port and um...

JSL: Where did the kids who came there come from? What community in Corpus Christi did they come from mostly?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:07:36

YO: It was mostly I guess, what do you call them, from I mean, from that area which was, it was not middle class people, it was ah... what do you call them, from the barrio...people. Mostly barrio people. But then we would get them from everywhere too, but our majority was all from the neighborhood people, from there, from that area.

JSL: And what did people do when they came to The Club Casino?

YO: They would come in, they would drink and dance. That's what they would do.

JSL: Tell me all the things that you did at Club Casino?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:08:16

YO: I work at the door, checking I.D.'s and taking the money, you know, and, of course I even worked the bar, stopped a couple of fight and, ah, be in charge of the security there too, that was working, 'cause I had city policemen working for me.

JSL: Ok tell me about that. Why did you need security?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:08:46

YO: 'Cause it was a rowdy place, we had a lot of fights and um that's why we had to have them there.

JSL: Were there ever any incidents?

YO: There were stabbings. Shootings. But mostly fights.

JSL: And can you tell me, do you remember any of the, who did you employ, for the most part, at The Club Casino, as security?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:09:12

YO: The one in charge was Carlos Cavasos. And then he would hire whoever to work there with him. And we had like Thomas Mylett, we had... see my mind goes. I forget the names.

JSL: O.K. Where did they, where did they work during the day. If they were working -

YO: City policemen. For the city. They worked for the city.

JSL: Where for the city? Tell me?

YO: They were patrolmen.

JSL: Ah, they were patrolmen.

YO: They were patrolmen.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:09:47

JSL: O.k. Paul Rivera?

YO: Was a patrolman, back then.

JSL: Did he work at the club at any point?

YO: He did.

JSL: Robert Mayorga?

YO: He did.

JSL: O.K. Rojelio Garcia (Sp?)

YO: Yes.

JSL: All of those Corpus Christi police department folks. Was there any saying back they about how you, what you needed to do to get fully trained to be a Corpus Christi police officer?

YO: (laughs) They would say.... Well there was one officer who would say that he would break them in there, the rookies they would he would hire them so that he could break them in. At the club.

JSL: And what, what time of day? When, when was the club open?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:10:33

YO: It would open up at 8 till 2, and then on weekends, we would stay until 4 in the morning. Fridays and Saturdays till 4. From 8 to 4 o'clock in the morning.

JSL: O.k. let me ask you about a particular individual. A man by the name of Beto or Herberto Vela. Did you know Beto Vela?

YO: Yes I did.

JSL: Tell me a little about Beto Vela. Start with his his name, give me his name and tell me what you remember?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:11:07

YO: Ok, Beto Vela was a guy who went there every night. And he

was the type that didn't drink, would just buy his Cokes and have all these woman after him. He would date so many women there, so he would go out with so many. Most of them all had kids from him. So..

JSL: And when.... Describe, lets say Beto came in at night, where would he go, where would he...

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:11:47

YO: When he would come in, he would stand buy his Coke. And stand there by the bar, looking towards the dance floor, you know, and talking to, mingling with those people who were all around there with him. And um of course Henry Vela and Jessie Garza, Pete Olivarez and all, you know would talk to him there and um...

JSL: Who else would talk to him?

(Clock chimes start)

YO: DeLuna.

JSL: What's his first name?

RP: Jim we going to put this-

JSL: Yeah I got to do that all again. What was his first name?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:12:21

YO: I saw him talking to Carlos DeLuna and um... his brother. Ok, when Beto Vela would go in the club, he would walk, like I said, straight to the bar and buy his coke and most of the people around him were either Pete Olivarez or Henry Vela or, like, Jesse

Garza, and DeLuna, Carlos DeLuna, or Manuel DeLuna would be there, you know, so. And the girls would be most of the . . . they would all be there, like, Teresa, Teresa, and Yolanda Lucio, and Linda Perales. Mary Ann, Mary Ann Perales did not go that much but she would be there, sometimes, with them, talking. They would all be there talking, and they would dance. Beto would dance a lot, he was a dancer. He was always dancing with most of the girls there.

JSL: Do you remember a woman by the name of Paula Hernandez? Do you remember her being with Beto?

YO: I heard about her being, but I don't remember her, really.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:14:18

JSL: Well, you may not remember what she looked like, but do you remember her being at the club? That's the question I'm asking.

YO: I remember them talking about her being there, but like I said, I don't remember her.

JSL: Ok. And which of those women did Beto Vela have children with? We've mentioned a woman named...

YO: Linda Perales. Terry Perez and I know Yolanda Lucio, had kids from him. And some other ones, that I can't even remember their names.

JSL: O.k. Did you hear when you heard this talk about Paula Hernandez, that she had a child by Beto Vela?

YO: Yeah, because Terry had mentioned something about, that Paula

having.... See cause, these girls they would usually fight over him. They would always be fighting over him.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:15:11

JSL: O.k. And the Terry, the Terry who said something about Paula Hernandez, what was her name? Give her full name?

YO: Perez, Teresa Perez.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:15:28

JSL: O.k. You've mentioned... Oh were there any other women who were around in that same set of women that you've just mentioned?

YO: Uh, Mary Ann would go, Linda Perales' sister, Mary Ann Perales she would go there occasionally, but she wasn't a regular like her sister, Linda, was always there.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:17:01

JSL: You mentioned a person by the name of Carlos DeLuna, what.... Did he interact with Beto Vela?

YO: Yeah, he talked, came over.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:17:09

JSL: What was Carlos DeLuna like?

YO: Well, to my recollection, I can't really tell you much about him because I know he was, he would get drunk a lot, and they would ask him to leave.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:17:38

JSL: O.k. Now you mention a number of folks who were there around

Mr. Vela. Around Beto Vela: Henry Vela, George Vela, Carlos DeLuna, Manuel DeLuna, you mentioned...

YO: Jessie Garza.

JSL: Yes Jessie Garza, Pedro Olivarez. And you've mentioned some women also, the Perales sisters ah, Teresita Perez, you mentioned Luci, Lucio a woman-

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:17:54

YO: Yolanda.

JSL: Yolanda Lucio. Did all of those people know each other?

YO: Oh, yes.

JSL: Talk to each other?

YO: They all knew each other. All that little circle knew everybody. Actually, everybody knew everybody at the club. Most of them either lived close by each other, but they all knew each other.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:18:15

JSL: So all of the Vela's would know the Perales sisters?

YO: Right.

JSL: And all the Perales sisters would know the DeLuna brothers?

YO: Yes. They all knew each other.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:18:24

JSL: So the circle of people we were just talking about, the women

and the men around Beto Vela, ah, how did they interact with each other. Did they know each other, did they speak to each other? If you could just describe how that went on a given night?

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:18:48

YO: O.k. Well Beto Vela knew, you know, would talk to Carlos DeLuna, Manuel DeLuna, Jessie Garza, Pete Olivarez, Henry Vela and George and ah... they were and they all knew each other and the girls that were there too, the Perales sisters and Teresa Perez and, you know, Yolanda Lucio, and all of them. Everybody knew everybody. They would all talk to each other.

JSL: O.k. When you say that Peralas' sisters you mean?

YO: Mary Ann Perales and Linda Perales.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:19:31

JSL: O.k. I'm going to show you some photographs. And these are it's, one, two, three, four, five, six photographs. The photographs each say on the back "Y.O.": Yolanda Ortiz. Both the initials here are Y.O. 12/6/04, which is today's date. And then they are numbered number one thru number six. And what I'd like you to do is, I'm going to hand you number one and just look at the picture and tell me. I'll bring it to you. Just tell me if you recognize who's in it and where it is. Where if you recognize where that picture was taken.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:20:07

(JSL gives picture number one to YO)

YO: O.k. This is Pete Olivarez. And it was taken at The Club Casino.

JSL: O.k. Pete also go by Pedro?

YO: Yes.

JSL: Olivarez.

YO: Yes.

JSL: O.k. And now I'm going to hand you, I'll take that one back, and I'm going to hand you number two. And again where that was and who, who that is if you recognize him

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:20:34

(JSL gives picture number two to YO)

YO: O.k. That's again Pete Olivarez. And those girls, I really don't, I know I would see them there, but I don't know their names. But this is at The Club Casino.

JSL: O.k. And Mr. Olivarez is the one in the middle?

YO: In the middle.

JSL: The lucky gentleman in the middle between-

YO: Yeah, with the two girls.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:30:50

(YO gives picture number two back to JSL)

JSL: Thank you. I'm going to hand you what I've numbered number three. And tell me if you recognize where and who that is.

DeLuna Tape #7

December 5, 2004

Interview Yolanda Ortiz -- DVD

YO: O.k. This is Eddie Zamora, and this was taken at The Club Casino too.

JSL: O.k. There's two gentlemen there. Which one is Eddie Zamora?

YO: The one in the black.

DeLuna Tape # 007 09:21:10

JSL: O.k good. Um... Now I'm going to hand you what I've numbered number four.

TAPE ENDS

DeLuna Tape #008

DeLuna Tape #008 09:21:44

JSL: Okay, now I'm going to hand you another photograph, this one number four, and we've got some pretty splashy colors there. Tell me what that is. *(Hands her a photograph.)*

DeLuna Tape #008 09:21:51

YO: Ok, this is the Club Casino, and that's Henry Vela on the right hand side. The gentleman on the left I don't recognize. But Henry Vela used to work for us as a DJ.

DeLuna Tape #008 09:22:09

JSL: And what was Henry's relationship, if any, to Beto Vela?

DeLuna Tape #008 09:22:11

YO: And he was half-brother to Beto Vela.

DeLuna Tape #008 09:22:15

JSL: And I'm going to hand you number five, who's there, who's

that? (*Hands her another photograph.*)

DeLuna Tape #008 09:22:20

YO: Ok, this is Henry Vela again, and he's there at the Casino Club. And, like I said, he used to work as a DJ for us.

DeLuna Tape #008 09:22:30

JSL: Is he alive today?

DeLuna Tape #008 09:22:32

YO: No, he was killed in a car accident years back.

DeLuna Tape #008 09:22:36

JSL: Ok, then I'm going to ask: the last picture, number six, where and who?

DeLuna Tape #008 09:22:41

YO: Ok, this is Rita. I don't recall her last name, but this is taken at the Casino Club.

[End of Interview]