



# West Valley VIEW

The community newspaper of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, Litchfield Park & Tolleson, AZ  
Phone (623) 535-8439

Friday, October 30, 2009

## Dead reckoning *Dia de los Muertos fest at EMCC Saturday*

Friday, October 30, 2009



A West Valley dance group is attempting to bring new life to an ancient Mexican tradition that honors the deceased.

The second annual Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, celebration will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at Estrella Mountain Community College, at Dysart and Thomas roads in Avondale.

The dance group, Ballet Folklorico Esperanza, was started two years ago by parents who wanted their children to know where they came from. Its goal is to teach dances from all 32 states in Mexico, as well as geography, culture, customs and language.

Dia de los Muertos was chosen as its signature event because of the need for the holiday to be understood by the public, Director Kathi Soria said.

"It's essential to enjoy and understand another's culture and see how we can be so different yet so much alike," she said.

**BUCKEYE DANCER DALIA MEDINA,** then 12, wearing a traditional ballet folklorico costume, dances in Avondale during last year's Dia de los Muertos festivities. Estrella Mountain Community College's second annual Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, celebration will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

The Mexican celebration is held every year Nov. 1-2 to remember those who are deceased. Traditionally, pictures are placed on altars with food and drinks, candles are lit to guide their way home and soap and water is put out so the deceased can freshen up after the long trip back.

"Death is just a passage into the next stage of life and it teaches all that death is not to be feared, but accepted and revered," Soria said.

The free event, which is tied into EMCC's Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations, will have two altars where people can place offerings to honor the dead. Candles will also be sold for \$3.

"We're hoping people will learn more about the Hispanic culture and the celebration of those who have passed," said Christina Izaguirre. "We are a Hispanic-serving institution, and need to support each other's endeavors."

Ballet Folklorico Esperanza will perform at 1 p.m. for about 45 minutes. Additional entertainment will include Un Corazon Flamenco, Latino Rebel Band and Mariachi Pasion, an all-girl group.

Food will be sold, and a children's corner will feature free crafts and games related to the event, such as coloring traditional masks.

For information about Ballet Folklorico Esperanza or the Dia de los Muertos fiesta, call 602-403-1575.

Emily McCann can be reached by e-mail at [emccann@westvalleyview.com](mailto:emccann@westvalleyview.com).

## Related Links

---

Content © 2009 West Valley View  
Software © 1998-2009 **Iup! Software**, All Rights Reserved