



North American Basque Organizations, Inc.

# HIZKETA

hizketa eginez, elkar hobe ezagutzen dugu



**"Zazpiak-Bat:"  
The 7  
Essentials  
of a successful  
Basque club**



Udaberri 2006 Spring

MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Volume 17:2



## Hizketa & Astero: NABO news on paper and online

*This is the North American Basque Organizations' tri-annual newsletter. HIZKETA, Basque for conversation, expresses our aim: to promote and encourage greater conversation and communication on matters of shared interest among all of our Basque communities. N.A.B.O. provides all member clubs with a master copy and asks that they print copies and distribute them to their membership. This issue starts a new format in look and length; it is shorter now because we have a new online source of more news and information with the inauguration of Astero which is a weekly email update of Basque news and information. To check this out and for free sign up for weekly email updates, email [info@basques.us](mailto:info@basques.us)*



## NABO President's Message

The future of our Basque-American community—or what it will be—will be decided within the next 15 to 20 years. The immigrant generation of Basques established the foundation of our clubs, but now the torch is being passed to the generation of Basques born in American and it will be this younger generation that will decide what it means to be Basque in America in the 21st century. So now is the time to begin work on this transition as both generations can hopefully work together in a mutually beneficial way.

Where is the next generation of young adult Basque community leaders? There was a Kristie Onaindia in Bakersfield, a Jean Flesher in Salt Lake, a Patty Miller in Boise, a Jeanette Almirantarena Duhart in Chino, to name a few. Young people like these stepped up in years past, but where are the teenagers and twenty-somethings of today (and the exceptions in some communities prove the general rule that we're missing many from this crucial generation of young adults). This is the age when most of us were looking to find something, to belong to something larger than ourselves. Thus, this is the window of opportunity!

Udaleku's redefinition for kids ages 10-15 will mean that it will most likely

function much smoother, but of course now we took away a possible means of connecting with the 15+ age youth. Valerie Etcharren had her eye on this and last year offered a workshop. Xabier Berrueta & others are at work putting together a great series of Ikaspilota programs in SF and Boise. The Basque Government sponsors an annual two-week Gaztemundu program for youth in the Basque country, but its impact here has remained limited. One reason is that few people apply (whether because of poor communication or general lack of interest) and most those who have attended have faded away. I believe we should stay with promoting this program, but we also need to construct a local, domestic program to better connect with young adults and keep them integrated and productive in their communities.

So that is why NABO is poised to initiate **GAZTEALDI** (Basque for "time of youth"). At this summer's Udaleku in Elko a group of young adults who had applied to serve as aides will instead be coming to help form a team that will construct what Gaztealdi will be, when, where, etc. If this is going to be for young adults, then we must have them be a part of its creation from the beginning. My thanks to the Elko organizers who are willing to give this a chance, and here's hoping that this initial foray will yield some great results down the line because this will be our Basque future. Elkarrekin goazen aurrera!

*Mary Gaztambide*

## Bizi Emankorra "Lifetime Contribution"



NABO periodically recognizes the extraordinary contributions of individuals to the promotion of our Basque heritage beyond the local to the regional or national level. Accordingly, this year at the Buffalo NABO Convention we will be honoring Pierre Etcharren & Grace Mainvil for their many years of service.



## ASTERO Weekly Basque Updates

To subscribe to this free weekly online NABO news & information service, send an email to: [info@basques.us](mailto:info@basques.us)

What does it take to have a successful Basque club? Many things actually, but here the focus is on seven elements that will make a crucial difference between a club that sputters versus one that thrives: workers, recreation, donors, educators, leaders, a crowd and *gogoa*. Combining these seven (zazpi) elements will make for a stronger club (one),

Those who have worked to form and maintain a Basque club know that this task is not an easy one. To start a club, it requires a grass-roots effort were someone actually takes the initiative to contact others about the possibility of getting together and forming a club. This might mean going through the local phone book and finding and calling the Basque surnames; placing ads in newspapers; contacting area Spanish or French clubs that might have Basque members, etc. Bottom line—it takes someone(s) with initiative and that takes us to our first crucial element of a Basque club.

1. **WORKERS.** The question "who is Basque" can still trigger a lively discussion. Is a Basque an Euskaldun—one who speaks the Basque language? Someone born to a Basque parent or someone born in the Basque country? The criteria varies from person to person so here's mine: a Basque is someone who moves tables and chairs for a Basque event. A Basque club will be only as strong as its foundation, and in this case it is the strength and dedication of its workers who are willing to give of their time (for no pay) for a common cause.

2. **RECREATION.** This can be called different things, but I'm going with this because it links with our NABO formula of recreation + education = perpetuation. Bottom line, Basque gatherings have to be fun or else people are not going to opt attending. The primary impetus behind the formation of most Basque clubs that are now celebrating anniversaries that stretch across decades is because people wanted to get together to have a good time. Until now, recreation has revolved around a good meal & music for singing &/or dancing.

3. **DONORS.** While money doesn't literally make the world go around, in sure does makes a difference for a Basque club. It takes the generosity of people not only to give of their time, but also of money which is why donors are a crucial component. Fundraisers are a reality for every successful because you need money to pay the bills.

4. **EDUCATORS.** This group are what I consider the visionaries; those who see new ways of connecting with people to keep the club vibrant and alive. Today people have lots of choices of how to spend their free time; the educators have

to come up with ways of enticing people to commit some of that time to Basque things, and a big part of that comes with educating people about who and what the Basques are.

5. LEADERS. All the great ideas in the world amount to nothing if they don't get off the ground. This is why a successful club is due to a handful of people who find a way to get people to begin pushing in the same direction. This is not easy, and it takes exceptional people skills. Able leaders are those who find ways of getting people to want to join in the effort because it is worth their while.

6. A CROWD. In every club it is always a minority that does a majority of the work. But it is counter-productive to scold people for not working more. The simple fact of the matter is that we want people to come to our events—otherwise what good is all the effort? So yes, we also need those people who work or donate little or nothing, because they too make the Basque club a success because we want our events well attended.

7. GOGOA is the Basque word for desire or will. It ultimately comes down to this great intangible: Euskaldun bizi nahia—the will to live as Basque. We want to make identifying oneself as being Basque as something worthwhile, and this will be our largest endeavor in the future.

These are some of my preliminary ideas (John Yursa, NABO Facilitator): I'd be curious to know what others think. Send your thoughts to [info@basques.us](mailto:info@basques.us) Let's share our ideas of what it takes to keep our Basque communities thriving.



**GOIAN BEGO:  
Chaplain deaths**

Sadly earlier this year we lost two former Basque-American chaplains: Aita Jean Challet who served us from 1964-70 and Aita Jean Pierre Etcheverry who served us from 1986-89. To find out more go to [www.basques.us](http://www.basques.us) and follow the Astero link.



**ETA announced a permanent cease fire: could this be the end of violence in the Basque country?**

Some of the biggest news coming from the Basque country recently was ETA's announcement that it plans to end its decades long struggle. In a videotape showing three hooded ETA operatives seated in front of the ETA flag, a woman ETA operative stated "Euskadi Ta As-

katasuna (ETA) has decided to declare a permanent cease-fire as of March 24, 2006. The aim of this decision, ETA stated, is to promote a democratic process" in the Basque country. After four decades, is it realistic to hope that the conflict will really end? ETA had previously declared a cease fire, but this one is distinguished by the inclusion of the word "permanent."

The initials ETA stand for "Euskadi 'ta Askatasuna" [Freedom for the Basque Country]. The organization emerged during the years of Francisco Franco's dictatorship in Spain. Franco's forces prevailed in the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s, and the Basques of Spain found themselves on the wrong side of the decision. Franco's vision of a totally unified Spain left no room for Basques that claimed to be distinctive. He set about earnestly in pursuing a program to "de-Basque:" many Basques had their property seized and/or were jailed, he replaced the Basque Catholic clergy with Spanish imports and his regime outlawed the use of Euskara, the Basque language. Whenever Basques resisted, Franco's regime responded with harsh repression. ETA's armed crusade phase began in 1968 and has since claimed almost 900 lives.

Many hoped that with the death of Franco in 1975 and the creation of a democratic Spain, ETA would desist and the conflict would end. These hopes were shattered when ETA actually increased its attacks. By 1980 the carnage reached a high with 88 killed, 81 wounded and seven kidnapped. As post-Franco Spain embarked on its democratic experiment which saw the creation of autonomous regions [Araba, Bizkaia & Gipuzkoa formed the region "Euskadi" and Nafarroa opted to form its own autonomous region] ETA nevertheless continued to hit harder and harder, seemingly confident that its armed fight would yield success. But you cannot lead if people do not follow. Apparently ETA clung to the notion that the general silence of Basque society denoted a tacit approval of their actions. But then some of ETA's bold moves might well have altered this dynamic and alienated fellow Basques.

In the late 1990s ETA gunmen kidnapped and executed Miguel Angel Blanco, a 29 year old Spanish politician in the Basque Country. Whereas ETA militants could ignore the previous declaration of condemning violence as mere political posturing on the part of politicians, the Basque people's reaction to the Blanco killing sent an unequivocal message. Basques in huge numbers poured out onto the streets to join millions of others across Spain shouting *Nahiko da!* "Enough!" This might well have compelled ETA and its supporters to reappraise the situation.

Additionally some give credit to a con-

certed police crackdown in recent years in Spain and France with weakening the group. Others maintain that what finally marked the beginning of the end was the aftermath of the March 11, 2004 terror attacks in Madrid -- carried out by Islamic extremists -- that effectively stymied ETA. Public revulsion over terrorism now made deadly violence counter-productive for the Basque group. ETA has not killed anyone since 2003, and many of its recent attacks have been preceded by warning calls that gave police time to evacuate people before the bomb exploded.

This declaration from ETA is cause for new-found optimism, but there are real challenges ahead if ETA violence is really go to disappear forever. Lehendakari Ibarretxe concluded his response to ETA's declaration with a general call to all Basques: "we have the right and the responsibility," he stated, "to go down this road [to peace] together." Now only time will tell. Let us hope and pray that maybe this time it will be different; maybe this time there will be peace for our European cousins.



**Upcoming NABO  
2006 Events:**

Mus Finals:  
June 17 in Gardnerville, NV



Udaleku / Gaztealdi planning  
June 18-30 in Elko, NV



Kantari Eguna:  
July 1 in Elko, NV



Ikaspilota:  
in San Francisco & Boise



NABO Convention  
July 20-23 in Buffalo, WY



Pilota championship:  
Aug 5 in Fresno, CA



Visit [www.nabo.us](http://www.nabo.us) for more information about these events. Ikusi arte!



For more information visit:

[www.nabo.us](http://www.nabo.us)