

Weeklies target Hispanic community

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Body

Two new **Hispanic**-language newspapers have joined the dozen or so Spanish- language publications already serving Gwinnett County.

El Volante and El Norte debuted at about the same time in April, but the papers have different purposes.

El Volante, or "The Flyer," is the brainchild of Mauricio Monreal, a former news anchor for WPLO, the popular **Hispanic** AM radio station that blankets metro Atlanta.

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Working from his Lawrenceville apartment, Monreal started the **weekly** tabloid to serve what he considers the unappreciated and sometimes disrespected Hispanics: immigrant workers.

"Few people know the situation of the immigrant workers," said Monreal, sitting in front of a computer screen with a mock-up of this week's edition. About 6,000 copies of the free newspaper are distributed on Fridays in stores and apartment complexes throughout Norcross, Lawrenceville, Chamblee and other **communities**.

In a recent edition, Monreal --- the sole reporter, photographer and newspaper distributor --- wrote a front-page story about the recent immigrant raid in Marietta. He also editorialized about the roundup, saying that immigration officials typically bear down in the summer months.

"The first and most important purpose of this publication is to share the reality of an immigrant's life," Monreal said. "This is the **community**'s newest paper, and it will do well."

But so will El Norte (translation: "The North"), a more mainstream newspaper, predicted Filiberto Prieto, president of Prieto Communications, the Lawrenceville business that also owns radio station WPLO, Monreal's former employer.

Prieto, a businessman who also owns eight **Hispanic** fast-food restaurants in metro Atlanta, said he went into publishing because he had an advertising sales staff and various **community** contacts in place through his radio station.

About 10,000 copies of the colorful free publication are distributed on Thursdays in Tucker, Chamblee and Norcross. It also can be found in College Park, Forest Park, Roswell, Alpharetta and Gainesville, Prieto said Monday.

"We figured it would be easier for us than anyone else to come out with a **Hispanic** newspaper," Prieto said. "It's not just another newspaper. It's a full-sized paper, not a tabloid."

Indeed, El Norte is flashier --- the June 17 edition had a picture of a bikini-clad woman in the corner and a separate entertainment insert with information about **Hispanic** stars like music sensation Ricky Martin.

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"We are new in the business," Prieto said. "We have a bigger goal: to become a better newspaper."

Graphic

Photo

Paper chase: Mauricio Monreal is editor of El Volante. / RICHARD FOWLKES / Staff

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