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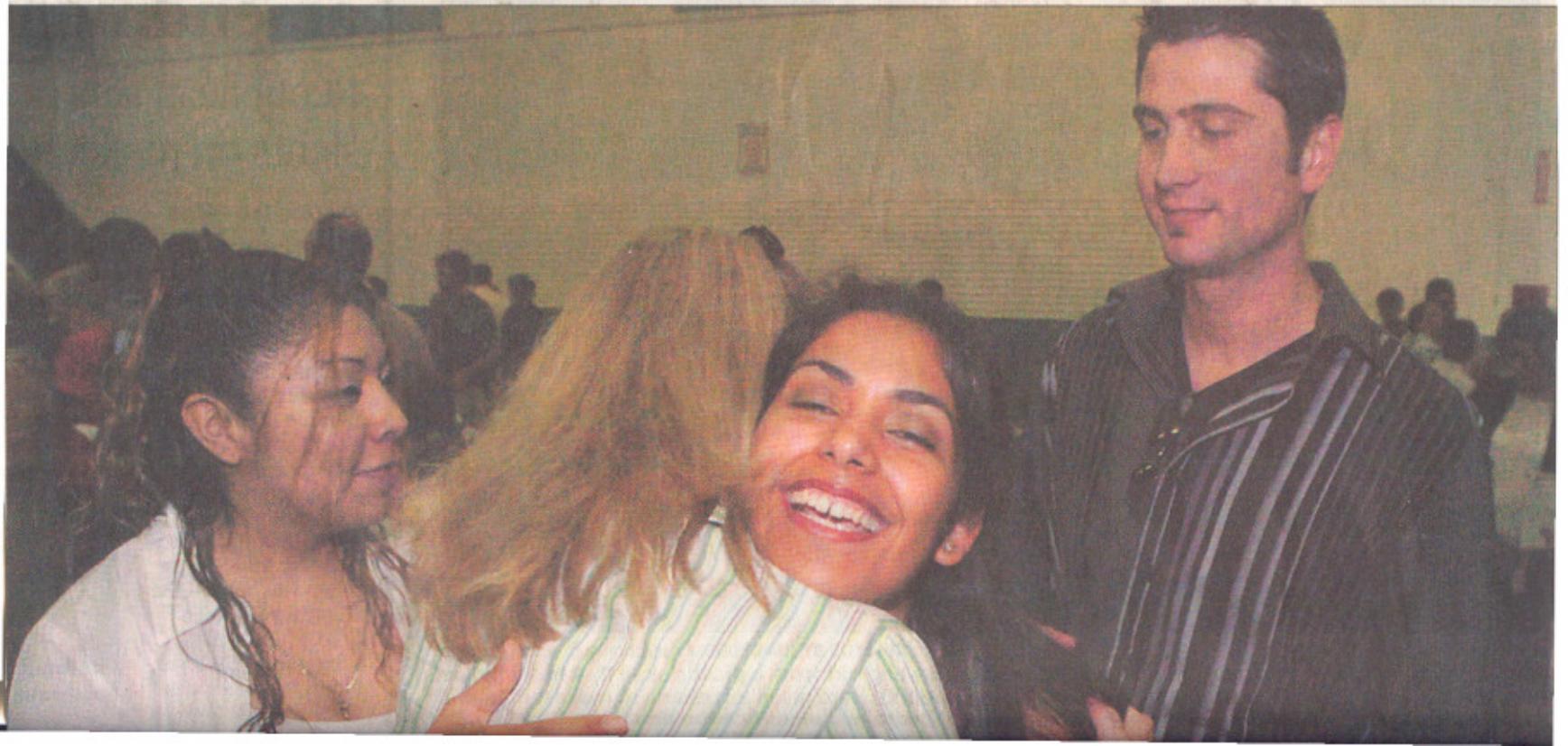
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THURSDAY

Citizen Miller





PHOTOS BY JIM RYDBOM / jrydbom@greeleytrib.com

Nubia Miller gets a hug from her mother-in-law, Cyndi Moll, after officially becoming a United States citizen in a naturalization ceremony at the 4-H building at Island Grove Regional Park in Greeley. Miller is surrounded by family members, from left, sister Kenya Ordaz, 16, husband Ryan Miller and their 6-year-old son, Bradley. Miller was one of 75 immigrants who took the citizenship oath on Wednesday.

Woman, 74 other immigrants become U.S. citizens

BY BRADY MCCOMBS
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Nubia Miller's first few months in the U.S. didn't go smoothly.

She was a 13-year-old girl from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, who didn't speak English and knew nothing about the U.S. Her middle school in Tulsa, Okla., offered no English as a Second Language courses. Teachers and students treated her like any other seventh-grader.

"It was scary," said Miller, 28, of Windsor. "It was like you're coming to another world."

Little by little, she adapted and made that strange, new world her home.

She learned English, acclimated to the culture and made friends at middle school. Her family moved to Shenandoah, Iowa, where she graduated from high school and studied to be an office technical assistant at a community college.

She met her husband, Ryan Miller, while working at a Pizza Hut. The couple moved to Fort Collins in 1997 and then to Windsor in 2001,



Nubia Miller smiles as she finishes saying the citizenship oath to become a U.S. citizen during a naturalization ceremony in Greeley.

where they live today with their 6-year-old son, Bradley. She works as an office assistant for a doctor in Fort Collins.

On Wednesday, she made the U.S. her official home, becoming a citizen at a naturalization ceremony at

the Island Grove Regional Park 4-H building hosted by U.S. Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, R-Colo. Miller was one of 75 immigrants from 32 countries who took the citizenship oath. They join an estimated 11.3 million other naturalized citizens in the country.

BECOMING A CITIZEN

To become a U.S. citizen, an individual must meet the following requirements:

- Live in the U.S. for at least five years as a permanent resident (or three years if married to and living with a U.S. citizen).
- Be present in the U.S. for at least 30 months out of the past five years (or 18 months out of the past three years if married to and living with a U.S. citizen).
- Live within a state or district for at least three months before applying to become a citizen.

Miller smiled throughout the ceremony and hugged her husband and son afterward. Her parents-in-law, Les and Cindi Moll, friend Desiree Chasco, and sister, Kenya Ordaz, 16, came to watch the ceremony.

Woman took citizenship test in June

U.S. CITIZENS

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"I feel better," Miller said. "Now, I can go get my passport."

Miller earned the right to become a citizen because she has lived in the U.S. at least five years as a permanent resident. She put in her application in March and took the citizenship test in June. She went to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office in Denver three times.

She said she decided to opt for the citizenship route instead of renewing her green card so she could vote.

"There's a lot of politics out there, and you want your vote to count," Miller said.

Mario Ortiz, district director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and Greeley Mayor Tom Selders joined Musgrave in speaking to the immigrants and their families. Musgrave said she hosted the event to show her support for legal immigrants.

"What is nice about today is we get to come and honor people who have gone about it the right way," Musgrave said, "to honor them for having the tenacity and dedication to get through what it takes to become a U.S. citizen."