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News, Issues & Events from City of San Antonio Downtown Operations  
February 2008

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### Mark Your Calendar

**February 22 & 23**  
Make It Shine  
info: 207-8605 or [Sonia Gaeta](#)

**February 23**  
Houston Street Fair & Market  
info: 207-7258 or [Website](#)

### Out & About Downtown

by Paula X. Stallcup, Director, Downtown Operations



Downtown San Antonio is buzzing with activity this month, and you won't want to miss any of it! In this month's issue, you will read about several special events you can only find downtown. These events are designed to draw both locals and visitors to the center of our city where the entire family can enjoy lively entertainment in a festive atmosphere. Be sure to read more about Luminaria, the city's first all-night arts festival inspired by arts celebrations in Paris and Madrid, and the NCAA Final Four activities, including The Big Dance featuring live music and entertainment. These events are guaranteed to provide San Antonio nation-wide exposure.

In addition to coordinating special events, the Downtown Operations Department frequently partners with other City departments to enhance our service offerings and do more for you. This month, we partnered with the Convention and Visitors Bureau to launch a new branding campaign that will take San Antonio marketing to a new level. We are also teaming up with the Housing & Neighborhood Services Department to Make Downtown Shine, a clean-up project that will involve hundreds of volunteers and beautify downtown.

For more information on these and future downtown events, I urge you to stop by and visit Centro Info, a brand new downtown information center complete with maps, brochures, and a full-time staff person to serve you. As always, you can also call us directly with any feedback and questions you may have. We look forward to seeing you downtown!

We're located at 202 E. Nueva. Contact us at (210) 207-3677 or via email at [downtown@sanantonio.gov](mailto:downtown@sanantonio.gov) for questions or assistance related to downtown San Antonio.

### New Centro Info Center

by [Colleen Swain](#), Assistant Director, Downtown Operations

**February 29- March 2**  
 San Antonio Menudo Festival, Market Square  
[Website](#)

**March 15**  
 Luminaria Arts Night in San Antonio  
[Website](#)

**March 29**  
 Houston Street Fair & Market  
 info: 207-7258 or [Website](#)

**April 4 - 7**  
 NCAA 2008 Final Four and The Big Dance NCAA: [The Big Dance](#)

**April 6**  
 HemisFair 40th Anniversary Celebration  
 info: 207-3677

**April 13**  
 Main Plaza Opening Celebration and Ceremony

## Shining Moments



Make It Shine! will take place February 22nd & 23rd and again March 8th & 14th. In preparation for the upcoming special events in downtown, volunteers will be sprucing up HemisFair Park, Houston St., Alamo St. from Houston to Durango, Nueva St. from St. Mary's to Alamo and La Villita. Participants will be busy painting, planting, removing graffiti and power washing sidewalks and walkways. Make It Shine is a clean-up effort made possible by volunteers from various organizations. The Downtown Operations staff coordinates the events with the help of over 150 volunteers and City Departments such as Public Works, Housing and Neighborhood Services and the Convention and Visitors Bureau.



A much-needed service is ready to spring into action. The new Centro Info Center, with an official ribbon cutting scheduled, will feature 12 individual public restrooms, plus a combination family/disabled restroom.

Centro Info will be open 24 hours, 7 days a week with onsite security. Amenities to locals and tourists will include a large video screen showcasing local venues and an event board, plus brochures and maps. The facility will also provide visitor information services staffed by the Centro San Antonio Amigos and the Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Center is centrally located on the street level of the River Bend Parking Garage at Commerce and South Presa.

## A Star Is Born

by Felix Padron, Director, Office of Cultural Affairs



March 15th marks the debut of Luminaria Arts night in San Antonio. This first-ever event celebrates the city's premier artists and arts organizations and gives San Antonians a chance to experience the city's diverse cultures and world-class artistic heritage. Free and open to all,

Luminaria will take center stage downtown from 6 p.m. to midnight, with day-long activities scheduled throughout the city. The main event area is at Alamo and E. Houston Street, including Peacock Alley.

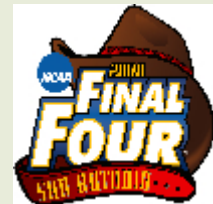
Over 100 artists and non-profit arts organizations will participate, demonstrating the dynamic vitality of our creative spirit. No other Texas city has attempted to coordinate a continuous artistic, educational and innovative programming for a city-wide arts celebration. Tradition tells us that the luminaria is a small, clever light that conjures up creative ideas which, in turn, inspire waves of innovation.

Luminaria is presented by Bank of America, in partnership with the Office of Cultural Affairs, Ford and AT&T. For details, visit [www.luminarias.com](http://www.luminarias.com) or contact Libby Tilley at [libby.tilley@luminarias.com](mailto:libby.tilley@luminarias.com).

## The Men's Final Four® and The Big Dance

by Elena Stout, NCAA Local Organizing Committee and Tonya Drake, Downtown Operations

On April 5th, the final four teams remaining in the NCAA® Division 1 Men's Basketball Tournament will contend for a shot at the National Championship game. Tickets are already sold out and 2,000 volunteers are needed to assist. The excitement spills over to more than just the games... it's The Big Dance!



The Big Dance is a free, 4-day street festival that will merge the Final Four with aspects of our annual New Year's Eve Celebration and NIOSA. The festival will take place on South Alamo between Market and Durango. Kick-off is Friday, April 4th, with the AT&T Block Party. The celebration runs through the final buzzer on Monday, April 7th.

For the semi-finals Saturday and the final Monday evening, giant video screens will be positioned around the stage. For more information, contact Elena Stout, 820-2127 or Tonya Drake, 207-7819. [www.ncaamarchmadness2008.com](http://www.ncaamarchmadness2008.com)

We're recruiting volunteers to help Make Downtown Shine! For more information, please contact us at 207-8605.

## Opening of Main Plaza



Main Plaza or Plaza de Las Islas will mark its formal opening Sunday, April 13th, beginning at 5 p.m. with a Mariachi Mass at San Fernando Cathedral. Celebration activities follow at 6. The highlight of the evening will be the formal opening ceremony featuring the lighting of the Main Plaza fountains to music performed live by the San Antonio Symphony.

## Celebrating Red Bird



Judy and Milton Babbitt have donated the striking, red sculpture in Convent Park, near the Augusta Street Bridge and the Southwest School of Art and

Craft. Known as Red Bird, the kinetic sculpture was designed and fabricated by local architect Michael Lance. This generous gift from the Babbitts to the City of San Antonio adds a delightful element to the corner of Convent and Augusta that people will enjoy for many years to come.

## It's In The Brand

by Robert Salluce, San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau



On February 14th, Valentine's Day, the San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau unveiled a new positioning that embraces the city's spirit, pride and culture.

The CVB aims to share that passion with a promise to potential visitors to experience what will remain "deep in their hearts." The message reflects the four key pillars of the brand: People, Pride, Promise and Passion.

Through advertising and integrated marketing efforts, the new image will be spread throughout the world.

Anchored by the familiar tagline, "Deep. In the Heart.", the logo is a passionate corazon red quatrefoil, a historic and symbolic shape prevalent in Spanish Colonial architecture that has sub-meanings of welcome and good tidings. For more about the brand, visit the CVB's website at [www.VisitSanAntonio.com](http://www.VisitSanAntonio.com).

## Launching The River Commission

by Penny Post oak Ferguson, Assistant City Manager

Last year, City Council approved an ordinance establishing a 7-member River Commission. The Commission serves the City Council in an advisory capacity on all aspects of the development and operations of the River Walk and the San Antonio River.



Members of the Commission are Dr. Julian H. Trevino, Chairman/Historic Preservation Category; Lynda Billa Burke, Vice-Chair/Community Category; A. J. Rodriguez and David Straus, Business Category; J. Darryl Byrd, Conservation Category; and Lionel Sosa and Lisa Wong, Tourism Category.

On December 20, 2007, the San Antonio River Commission adopted the Vision and Mission Guidelines that the Commission will abide by when making decisions regarding items and projects that are in the River Improvement Overlay districts.

It is the desire of the Commission that this vision statement provide policy guidance in an effort to preserve, protect, and enhance the history, heritage, and ambiance of the River. On Wednesday, February 27, the River Commission will meet with various boards and commissions in order to convey the guidelines that have been adopted. These include Planning, Zoning and Historic and Design Review Commissions; San Antonio River Oversight Committee; River Walk Capital Improvements Advisory Board; San Antonio Conservation Society and the Paseo del Rio Association.

## Mapping Out The River Walk

by Joseph Cruz, Downtown Operations

The renovation of the "YOU ARE HERE" Americans With Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) maps on the River Walk began last year with the lengthy process of researching and developing the appropriate type of surface material to use. The South Texas summer heat can be brutal on all types of exteriors, especially Plexiglas and painted surfaces.



The Downtown Operations Department has partnered with Fossil Industries

of Deer Park, New York to upgrade the directional signage on the River Walk. The new signage material will be digital High Pressure Laminate (dHPL), a material that is, pound for pound, stronger than steel. Using extreme heat and pressure, Fossil fuses a graphic design between layers of thermosetting resins to form a true composite panel guaranteed to withstand everything. The maps will be graffiti proof, impervious to moisture, can never delaminate or crack, and are extremely resistant to UV rays, scratching, impact and cigarette burns. They are also guaranteed for twenty years to resist fading and weather deterioration. Some of the areas where Fossil signs are used include The National Zoo, Florida Keys National Marina Sanctuary, City of Chicago, New Mexico State Parks, National Geographic Society and Texas Parks and Wildlife. Look for the new A.D.A. maps in late March of this year.

## City of San Antonio - Downtown Operations

The mission of the Downtown Operations Department is to provide centralized services for activities related to maintaining the core of San Antonio in an exemplary condition and support downtown facilities, programs and events that highlight the city's unique qualities as a business center and tourist destination.

Need assistance? Have a suggestion for the newsletter? Contact us with comments or questions at [downtown@sanantonio.gov](mailto:downtown@sanantonio.gov).

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