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News, Issues & Events from City of San Antonio Downtown Operations
July 2010

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Mark Your Calendar

Now through August 14
Every Friday & Saturday

Out & About Downtown

by Paula X. Stallcup, Director, Downtown Operations



Downtown is off to a great start this summer with many activities, including our popular [Movies by Moonlight](#) series. We encourage everyone to come downtown and see what's new.

Downtown Operations has completed the installation of 134 [pay stations](#) which replaced 650 single head parking meters. We hope you're finding the pay stations convenient for your downtown parking needs. We are also working diligently to bring the debit/credit card capability to our parking garages and lots very soon. We would like your feedback on these pay stations.

We continue to strive to improve downtown. Enjoy the summer and please let us know if we can be of any assistance.

There is always something happening downtown, and every month we are making sure you know about it. As always, we look forward to seeing you out and about downtown!

We're located at 400 N. St. Mary's, #100. Contact us at (210) 207-3677 or via email at downtown@sanantonio.gov for questions or assistance related to downtown San Antonio.

Movies by Moonlight

by Tonya Drake, Special Projects Manager



Movies are back downtown for the summer...and movie-goers are loving it! The **Movies by Moonlight** outdoor cinema series in HemisFair Park, sponsored by River Center Mall, features free movies every Thursday in the

Fiesta Noche del Rio
Arneson River Theatre
www.fiestanochedelrio.com

July - September (Thursdays)

Movies by Moonlight
HemisFair Park
www.sanantonio.gov/dtops

July 4 - 29

(Wednesdays and Thursdays)
BRAVO Music & Dance Performances
Arneson River Theater in La Villita
www.sanantonio.gov/sapar

July 3 - 5

Fourth of July Celebration
Market Square
www.marketsquaresa.com

July 17

Visits to the Past -
Living History Presentation
Alamo Plaza
For info call 273-1730

August 7

Primer Sabado
Market Square
www.marketsquaresa.com

August 14

FORD Canoe Challenge
River Walk Extension
For info call 227-4262

July 4th Celebration

by Sonia Gaeta,
Sr. Management Analyst



This Fourth of July weekend, [Market Square](#) becomes the center piece of a grand patriotic fiesta! With over 30 food booths, live music, arts and crafts and children's activities, this celebration has something for everybody to include the young, and the young at heart.

This year's event will take place Saturday, Sunday and Monday, July 3-5. Hours of operation are 10:00

grassy area under the HemisFair Park archway at S. Alamo and Nueva. Come early for the preshow at 7:30 pm. The feature film premieres at 8:30 pm. July's feature schedule and times are:

July 8th	<i>Back to the Future</i>
July 15	<i>Space Odyssey 2001</i>
July 22	<i>Gremlins</i>
July 29	<i>Star Trek (2009)</i>

Movies By Moonlight is a family-friendly event that is FREE to the public. Do not forget to bring your blankets and lawn chairs! Concessions are available and movie-goers can park for free at the Alamo Lot near the Magik Theater and playground or at the Durango Street lots across from the Federal Courthouse on a first-come basis.

Movies by Moonlight is presented by the City's Downtown Operations Department with sponsorship by River Center Mall and is presented in part by Time Warner Cable.

Been to a movie screening lately? Take our online survey and give us your feedback at:

<http://www.sanantonio.gov/dtops/Events/moviesbymoonlight.aspx>

You can also follow us on Facebook or Twitter for current updates and information. See you soon under the moonlight!

Historic Houston Street

by Elizabeth Porterfield, Office of Historic Preservation



Houston Street, originally known as El Paseo or Paseo Hondo, was little more than a muddy lane in the mid 19th century until a bridge was constructed over the San Antonio River. The street was lined with small residences, lumber yards, corrals, and the U.S. Military headquarters. Much of the property was owned by the Maverick family. After construction of the bridge, the name was changed to Houston Street in honor of Sam Houston. As San Antonio developed into the largest city in Texas by 1900, Houston Street was transformed into the city's major business corridor with numerous theaters, department stores, restaurants, and offices. In the period roughly between 1880 and World War II Houston Street experienced an unprecedented building boom which produced some of San Antonio's most beautiful commercial architecture.

Through a grant from the U.S. General Services Administration's Good Neighbor Program, the City's Office of Historic Preservation and Downtown Operations will enhance the downtown visitor experience with interpretive signage in Alamo Plaza and along historic Houston Street.

Signage in Alamo Plaza will provide information regarding the Alamo as it existed in 1836.

A kiosk project will provide a self-guided walking tour of historic Houston Street. This adaptive reuse project reutilizes former telephone kiosks along downtown Houston Street. The series of eight kiosks between N. Alamo and N. Santa Rosa Streets will be equipped with informative panels on each side highlighting the history and architecture of Houston Street. Historic photos and text tell the story of Houston Street's development through the early 20th century. The tour extends from the imposing Federal Administration Building (former U.S. Post Office and Courthouse) at Alamo Plaza to the city's oldest hospital and burial ground (Santa Rosa Hospital and current Milam Square). Featured sites include the Gunter Hotel, Majestic and Empire Theaters, and more.

a.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday; and Monday from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. A special tribute to the King of Pop, Michael Jackson, will take place all three days of the festival. Don't miss live entertainment by Top Shelf, Los Banger Broz, Grupo Maravia and many more!

The event is free and open to the public and sponsored by the San Antonio Community Development Council, Inc. For more information, call (210) 733-0120.

Did You Know?



- Over 3900 people have come to Movies by Moonlight this year
- DTOPS sanitation crews empty 77 trash cans on the River Walk every day
- Our horticulturalists maintain 490,000 square feet of landscaped River Walk
- Downtown Operations maintains 6.1 miles of River Walk and sidewalk

Congratulations

All signs will be installed by August 1. Take the Houston Street walking tour and learn about the buildings that make this one of the city's most historic corridors.

Downtown Goes Digital

by Alyse Garber, Downtown Alliance



Now the 7th largest city in the U.S. can fit into the palm of your hand with Downtown Alliance San Antonio's new free mobile app for smartphones. Based on the non-profit's website, www.downtownsanantonio.org, the app features a downtown business directory with maps, GPS enabled directions, events, mobile coupons and more.

Downtown Alliance, an organization dedicated to making downtown a better place to live, work, shop, eat and be entertained, partnered with local leading mobile technology firm BiBiSi to offer the application for free.

Downtown Alliance President, Ben Brewer, commented, "We are always looking for additional ways to improve the downtown experience, and getting to and around downtown are frequent questions for tourists and locals alike." With Mayor Castro declaring the next ten years the "Decade of Downtown," Brewer and his staff saw an opportunity to better prepare downtown for the next ten years through mobile technology.

According to Nielsen Wire, "Smartphones are expected to overtake feature phones in the U.S. by 2011, and the popularity of mobile apps will only grow." Currently, there is a 99% penetration rate for phones with SMS, or texting, capabilities and 40% penetration for smart phones. The mobile app developed by BiBiSi offers an SMS component that can provide assistance even if the user can't access the internet through their phone. To access the app, users can text the word "downtown" to 45384. They will immediately receive a text message back with a link to the app, formatted to fit their cell phone model. Soon, users will also be able to type in the Downtown Alliance url (www.downtownsa.org) into their mobile browser to access the app.

BiBiSi Mobile President Enrique Garza explained "The unique thing about this project is that we didn't just make it work as an application for one carrier, we configured it to work with the majority of smartphones across all the major carriers, which we feel is the future of mobile applications."

The app will continue to grow and evolve to fit the needs of downtown. For example, future plans for the app include self-guided historical tours, real-time parking spot counts and last minute specials. Brewer concluded, "It is our goal that this becomes the go-to resource for everyone in downtown San Antonio, whether they live off of South Flores, in Stone Oak, San Francisco, or San Paulo."

Playground Fun for Everyone

by Veronica Garcia, Executive Assistant

Milam Park, located just west of the City's historic center and adjacent to Market Square, has been in existence as a park since 1885. In 1993, two physicians spearheaded a group that became known as the Friends of Milam Park, under the umbrella of the San Antonio Park's Foundation to redevelop the park. This effort was

Congratulations to Joyce Scott, a Parking Attendant in the Downtown Operations Department Parking Division! Joyce has earned an MBA from Wayland Baptist University in Human Resources and Management.

Joyce has been with our department since 1996. Her accomplishment was recently featured in the April 23, 2010 edition of the San Antonio Business Journal.

Our employees are our number one asset and we are excited about Joyce's achievement. Way to go!



Existing Milam Park playground

funded through private donations and grants. This project included the addition of a water feature, walking trails, game tables, a gazebo from Jalisco Mexico and a children's playscape installed by volunteer labor.

Nearly 20 years later, Milam Park is once again getting ready for a new addition. The City of San Antonio, in partnership with Boundless Playgrounds, Inc., is preparing to design and install the first playscape in a City park that would be accessible by locals and visitors alike. Boundless Playgrounds is a non-profit organization that works with communities throughout the nation to develop playgrounds accessible by all children, with or without disabilities. The non-profit organization was formed in 1997 with the mission to build truly inclusive playgrounds where children and adults of all abilities can play and learn together in a fun and welcoming environment.

This is the first project of its kind in San Antonio and Milam Park needs your help! Community stakeholders and volunteer groups are needed to help design and build the new playscape. To be a part of improving your community, and making the dream of having fun on the playground a reality for all children, contact the Downtown Operations Department to see how you can help at 207-3677.

Downtown STAR - Eddie Guajardo

by Veronica Garcia, Executive Assistant



The Downtown STAR award recognizes Downtown Operations Department employees that go above and beyond the call of duty, demonstrating exceptional **S**ervice, **T**eamwork, **A**ttitude and **R**esourcefulness. Each Downtown STAR receives an award, recognition in the department newsletter, lunch with the Director, and a special prize. A copy of the nomination also goes in their personnel file.

Awardees are selected once a quarter by a committee of Downtown Operations Department employees.

This month we highlight another Downtown STAR:

Eddie Guajardo, Building Maintenance Supervisor (Parking)

Eddie's "can do" attitude is like no other. He coordinated the installation of 117 parking pay station pads during our busiest time of the year. He worked several hours overtime to get the job done and ensured his regular tasks were also completed. Eddie even treated his employees to breakfast to thank them for a job well done. He strategized to save money on the project, including getting multiple bids, borrowing tools from other departments, and purchasing items at a reduced cost from the City of Austin. His efforts have saved our department money and helped us complete a high profile project on time with a very tight schedule.

Congratulations Eddie and thanks for all your hard work!

If you know a Downtown Operations Department employee who demonstrates exceptional customer service and has left a positive impression on you, nominate him/her for the Downtown STAR award at

<http://www.sanantonio.gov/dtops/DowntownStars.asp>. For more information, you may also contact Veronica at 207-8477.

Getting Around the River Walk

by Karina Alderete, Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)



Getting around downtown San Antonio and the River Walk just got easier for visitors and locals alike. Over 230 signs have been installed on the street and River Walk level to provide an enhanced visitor experience. These new signs replaced several generations of signs and offer a cohesive design that is consistent with the Museum Reach's signage and San Antonio's destination branding.

The signs were designed for durability and versatility: they're made with materials specific for high-traffic areas and designed for panel changes and maintenance or repair without having to remove the entire unit.

As you walk around downtown you'll notice various new types of signage. Entry markers identify stairways and accessible routes from street level to the river. New maps orient visitors clearly identify landmarks and popular points of interest. Street identity signs at stairs and ramps at the River level identify the street above. Interpretive graphics also tell the history and significance of important stops along the River Walk

The need for up-to-date directional signage is a priority of [Destination: SA](#), the City's strategic plan to grow the hospitality industry. The Convention & Visitors Commission Visitor Experience Commission made signage and wayfinding along the River Walk and downtown a priority, and with the CVB, worked with the [San Antonio River Authority](#) to complete a Signage Program that would link the already designed signage for the Museum and Mission Reaches.

Coordination of this project also involved input and collaboration from various agencies including the City's Downtown Operations, Parks & Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation, and the [Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) Departments, the San Antonio River Authority, San Antonio Downtown Alliance, and Bexar County. Thank you to our many partners who helped make this possible!

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.

400 N. St. Mary's, #100 San Antonio, Texas 78205
Hours: Monday-Friday 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

www.sanantonio.gov/dtops
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