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# F O C U S D O W N T O W N

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

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Mark Your Calendar

November 26

## Out & About Downtown

by Paula X. Stallcup, Director, Downtown Operations



The San Antonio Rock 'n Roll Marathon is one of the best events at bringing regionals and locals downtown. To prepare, we worked diligently to address various downtown issues, including sidewalks, tree grates, storm drains, code issues and trash pickup. The event provides us with a great opportunity to conduct these "fall cleaning" projects, just as we begin to focus our attention on creating a fun and festive holiday spirit throughout downtown.

The holiday season provides ample opportunities to come downtown and take in the holiday cheer. Mark your calendar for the annual tree lighting ceremony in Alamo Plaza, and then head over to the River Parade and Lighting Celebration on the River Walk and at the Arneson Theater. Plus, Market Square and La Villita will have several holiday activities your family is sure to enjoy. Be sure to also check out the new lights and decorations on Houston Street to get in the festive spirit anytime!

We encourage you to help us in our effort to create a welcoming downtown for locals and visitors. You can help by keeping your storefronts clean, removing graffiti promptly and reminding customers to avoid feeding the wildlife. The City of San Antonio and Centro San Antonio partner to provide downtown with the very best service and with your help we can create the best downtown experience for all.

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](mailto:downtown@sanantonio.gov) for questions or assistance related to downtown San Antonio.

Tree Lighting & Celebration  
Alamo Plaza  
For info call 207-3677

Holiday River Parade and  
Lighting of the River Walk  
[www.paseodelrio.com](http://www.paseodelrio.com)

**November 26 - 27**  
Feria de Santa Cecilia  
Market Square  
[www.marketsquaresa.com](http://www.marketsquaresa.com)

**November 27**  
La Villita Holiday Open House  
and Gran Tamalada  
La Villita  
[www.lavillita.com](http://www.lavillita.com)

**November 27 - 28**  
Holly Daze on the River  
La Villita  
For details call 207-3132

**November 27 - December  
18**  
Caroling Nights with Santa  
La Villita

Holiday Boat Caroling  
River Walk  
[www.paseodelrio.com](http://www.paseodelrio.com)

**November 28 - December  
4**  
Mariachi Vargas  
Extravaganza  
Downtown  
[www.mariachimusic.com](http://www.mariachimusic.com)

**December 3 - 19**  
Fiesta de las Luminarias  
River Walk  
[www.paseodelrio.com](http://www.paseodelrio.com)

**December 4**  
Primer Sabado & Gran  
Tamalada  
Market Square  
[www.marketsquaresa.com](http://www.marketsquaresa.com)

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

Kids Choir on the River  
Arneson River Theater  
For info call 477-5189

**December 5**  
Hanukah on the River  
Arneson River Theater  
[www.chabadsa.com](http://www.chabadsa.com)

**December 11**  
Blessing of the Animals  
Market Square

## The Spirit of Giving

by Marcie Hernandez, Paseo del Rio Association



Usher in the Holiday Season on the River Walk this year with the 2010 Ford Holiday River Parade and Lighting Ceremony. On November 26th at 7:00 in the evening, watch the San Antonio River Walk come alive under 13 miles of lighted strands and approximately 122,000 blinking lights.

A grand production, the 2010 Ford Holiday River Parade and Lighting Ceremony will be centered on the theme "The Spirit of Giving." This year's theme was chosen because it exemplifies one of the special things about the San Antonio community that sets it apart from other places: its generosity.

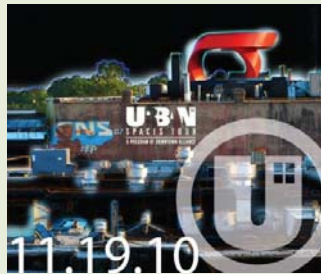
Chosen for her 41 years of dedication to the community of San Antonio, "Elf" Louise Locker was chosen as the Grand Marshal for this year's parade. Both monetary and toy donations are accepted, and approximately 60,000 gifts are needed. To assist in meeting the need of The Elf Louise Christmas project, the Paseo del Rio Association will be collecting gifts at select locations along the parade route. If you would like to make a donation, visit La Villita on Friday, November 26th, between 8am and 7pm.

A new sponsor of this year's parade is Macy's. The Macy's float theme, "Believe", is dedicated to the "Believe" holiday campaign, which encourages people to write a letter to Santa, letting him know they believe in the magic of the holidays. For every letter received at Macy's, a \$1 contribution is made to Make-A-Wish, up to \$1 million.

Purchase tickets for your seats by calling the Paseo del Rio Association offices at 210-227-4262 or at [www.TheSanAntonioRiverWalk.com](http://www.TheSanAntonioRiverWalk.com).

## Urban Spaces Tour

by Colleen Swain, Assistant Director



Join the Downtown Alliance to see a variety of urban stops, including some of the best penthouse vistas in the city. The 7th annual Urban Spaces event will be Friday, Nov. 19. The guided walking tour will cover some of the most exciting residential, commercial and cultural spaces in downtown San Antonio.

Food and drinks will be served, ending with a social reception atop Plaza Rio in the heart of downtown. Tours begin at 4pm, and space is limited, so please RSVP today to sign up for your preferred time slot. Student and military discounts are also available.) Log onto [www.downtownsa.org](http://www.downtownsa.org) for more info.

## Falling for Downtown

by Joseph Cruz, Downtown Operations Superintendent



Early Fall is the time of year when Downtown Operations staff begins the inspired task of replacing annuals along the San Antonio River Walk.

As the season cools and we begin to receive the occasional rain shower, another pleasant surprise occurs.

For info call 207-8600

Battle of Bexar  
La Villita - Cos House

SAMMinistries Donald  
Braswell and the Divos  
Concert

Arneson River Theater  
[www.samm.org](http://www.samm.org)

For more events visit:  
[www.sanantonio.gov/dtops](http://www.sanantonio.gov/dtops)

## La Villita Holiday Open House and Gran Tamalada

by Blanche Mendoza,  
Facilities Coordinator



The holidays will be in full swing on Saturday, November 27th at the La Villita Holiday Open House and Gran Tamalada. The free event begins at 10:00 a.m. and continues all day until 7:00 p.m.

Browse La Villita's shops featuring a vast assortment of unique and hand-crafted gifts for everyone on your list. The historic arts village will light up with luminaries and feature musical entertainment, local artisans, a hands-on tamale demonstration, plus traditional food and drink including *bunuelos*, *tamales*, *aguas frescas* and more.

Come learn the secrets to making your very own tamales with "Colectivo Cultural" and la familia de la Torre. With over 30 years of tamale making experience, the de la Torre family members are authentic *tamaleros* who have been teaching the art of the *tamalada* since 2001 through the hands-on workshop, *La Gran Tamalada*. The workshop will offer three free classes in Plaza Juarez at La Villita at 12:00 noon, 2:00 and 4:00 pm.

Beginning in September, the blooming shrubs, vines, tropicals and perennials will undergo another impressive bloom phase just before they subside for the season. But not to fear, there are plenty of other winter bloomers along the River Walk to catch your eye.

We are busily installing sun loving Pansies, Snapdragons, ornamental Cabbage and Kale, Violas and Alyssum to brighten up the season. Another Fall/Winter annual that is extremely versatile is the sweet-scented Cyclamen. It blooms in very little direct sunlight in colors that are in perfect step for the holiday season: white, pink, fuchsia and red.

It is always an enjoyable challenge to design landscaping that is suitable to the light requirements on the River. The horticultural staff will inspect an area and decide what type of plant material will grow in that type of environment. Gravels, large rock or small boulders are sometimes used, along with appropriate plants, to enhance an area. An excellent example can be found under the Market St. Bridge, on the west bank of the River, just south of the Casa Rio restaurant. The new boulders are composed of the minerals quartz and feldspar, and are very attractive and unique.

A different location that has just re-opened to the public after being closed for several years is the new Embassy Suites Hotel on the west bank of the River, between Houston and Travis Streets. The brand new landscape and eye-catching cascading water feature are in perfect harmony with the rest of the surrounding River Walk. Visitors new to the area will swear the setting had been there for many years.

This holiday season, enjoy the River Walk at any time of day, and fill your senses with the Fall sights and scents. Be sure to stop and smell the Cyclamen!



## Mexico and the Museo

by Erin Privratsky, Museo Alameda



On November 20, 2010, the Museo Alameda will proudly reveal its newest exhibition Revolution & Renaissance: Mexico & San Antonio 1910 - 2010. Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution, the exhibition explores the

evolution of art and culture in Mexico from 1910 through 1968, with particular attention to the impact of the cultural renaissance in San Antonio following the Revolution. The exhibition highlights artistic and cultural exchanges between San Antonio and Mexico and includes more than 200 rarely seen paintings, sculptures, and folk art objects.

The result of many years of organizational planning and research, Revolution & Renaissance breaks new ground for the museum. As the Museo Alameda redevelops and continues to build itself into a premiere art and cultural destination, the exhibition energizes the galleries of the museum and sets new standards for the presentation of Mexican art and culture in the United States.

Join us for the show opening on November 20 from noon - 6 pm. Admission will be free to the public. For more information, visit [www.thealameda.org](http://www.thealameda.org).

## Rock and Run

by Tonya Drake, Special Projects Manager

Don't miss a special guest appearance by the cast of San Antonio's popular comedy hit "Las Nuevas Tamaleras". The comical cast will team-up with the de la Torre family for *La Gran Tamalada* from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. For more information, call 207-8614.

## Market Square is Open



Don't let the construction deter you - Market Square shops and restaurants are open for your shopping and dining pleasure! Construction is on schedule, with a target completion in Spring 2011. The new Market Square will include ADA improvements in El Mercado along with a new entrance and awning plus a redesigned public plaza.

To ensure the safety of visitors, San Saba Street has been closed to vehicular traffic from Dolorosa to Commerce. The street will reopen at the end of December 2010.

Market Square features over 100 shops as well as celebrated restaurants and all will maintain regular hours of operation throughout the construction.

Visit our website at [www.marketsquaresa.com](http://www.marketsquaresa.com) for regular construction updates and information on upcoming events including the celebration of the new Market Square coming in the Spring of 2011.

## Market Square Events



The Rock 'n' Roll San Antonio Marathon & ½ Marathon took place on Sunday, November 14, 2010. This year's event started in downtown San Antonio in front of the Convention Center and continued past the Alamo, through downtown, around the King William neighborhood and along the Mission Trail, before finishing at the Alamodome.

The event saw 26,143 participants, plus 1,600 children who participated in the Kid's Rock event on November 13 in Brackenridge Park.

The marathon generates an estimated economic impact of over \$41 million dollars for the city of San Antonio. Many thanks to all the City departments and partners who helped prep San Antonio for this year's event, including Downtown Operations, Police, Fire, Public Works, Solid Waste, Alamodome, Code Compliance, CVB, SA Sports, VIA, HEB, and the Competitor Group. Thank you also to the nearly 4,000 volunteers, plus the downtown residents and businesses, who helped with communication and logistics for the event.

Congratulations and thank you to all those who participated in the 2010 Marathon and 1/2 Marathon!

## Ain't Main Plaza Great?

by Gwen Schuler, Communications & Public Affairs Department



Since its renovation just three years ago, Main Plaza has quickly become a gathering place for citizens and visitors and it is easy to see why it is the heart of our city. This innovative public space with a lush tree canopy, dancing fountains, comfortable seating areas, and varied landscaping further enhances our city's urban core.

San Antonians are not the only ones who value Main Plaza as a cultural gem! Main Plaza was recently recognized as one of the 10 Great Public Spaces in the United States by the American Planning Association. This national honor is the first designation for San Antonio. Previous Great Public Spaces winners have included Central Park in New York City and Union Station in Washington D.C.

"There are lots of great public places downtown, including La Villita and Market Square, along with Main Plaza. It is an honor for San Antonio to receive this national recognition" said Paula Stallcup, Director of the Downtown Operations Department.

This great public place truly personifies our vibrant community and makes downtown San Antonio a better place to live, work, shop and be entertained! With live performances and events that appeal to a variety of interests, Main Plaza provides ample opportunities for anyone to enjoy this great public space. For a complete schedule of upcoming events, visit [www.mainplaza.org](http://www.mainplaza.org).

## Downtown STAR - Sonia Gaeta

by Veronica Garcia, Executive Assistant



The Downtown STAR award recognizes Downtown Operations Department employees that go above and beyond the call of duty, demonstrating



Historic Market Square will be busy this holiday season with lively events that have something for everyone.

**Save the Dates!**

November 26 - 28  
Feria de Santa Cecilia  
10:00 am - 11:00 pm

December 4  
Primer Sabado and Gran Tamalada  
12:00 noon - 6:00 pm

December 11  
Blessing of the Animals  
12:00 noon - 6:00 pm  
Blessing and Procession at 1 pm

November 27 - December 19  
Bring the family for pictures with Santa inside Farmer's Market.

Market Square features many unique shops filled with gift ideas to fit every budget. Come join us this season and re-discover the largest Mexican market this side of the border!

For more details, call 207-8600 or visit [www.marketsquaresa.com](http://www.marketsquaresa.com).

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:

**Sonia Gaeta - Sr. Management Analyst**

Sonia never says a task is not in her job description. She tackles new assignments with enthusiasm, and encourages a team atmosphere. Her goal is always to figure out how to get it done. Although Sonia is now with the Public Works Department, her accomplishments in Downtown Operations can still be seen today. Just visit the next *Primer Sabado* in Market Square, which was started by Sonia, to see what we mean!

Congratulations Sonia and thanks for all you accomplished!

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.

**Downtown Operations Employees Are Committed**

The 2010 Employee Service Awards Reception was held on November 17 to honor employees who have served the City of San Antonio for 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years during calendar year 2010. Congratulations to the following Downtown Operations Department employees who celebrated these milestone service achievements!



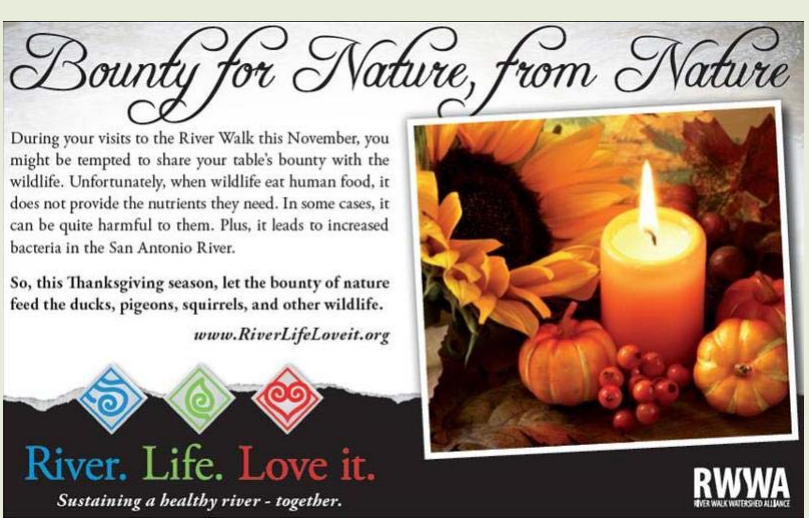
Al Garcia (40 yrs)

**40 years**  
Ydelfonso "Al" Garcia,  
Building Maintenance Mechanic (La Villita)

**30 years**  
Raul Vargas, Maintenance Worker  
(Downtown Parks & Plazas)

**25 years**  
Kathy Zuniga, Administrative Assistant II (Parking Division)

Thank you for your commitment to the citizens of San Antonio and downtown!



*Bounty for Nature, from Nature*

During your visits to the River Walk this November, you might be tempted to share your table's bounty with the wildlife. Unfortunately, when wildlife eat human food, it does not provide the nutrients they need. In some cases, it can be quite harmful to them. Plus, it leads to increased bacteria in the San Antonio River.

So, this Thanksgiving season, let the bounty of nature feed the ducks, pigeons, squirrels, and other wildlife.

[www.RiverLifeLoveit.org](http://www.RiverLifeLoveit.org)

**River. Life. Love it.**  
Sustaining a healthy river - together.

**RWWA**  
RIVER WALK WETFOOD ALLIANCE

## 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).

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](http://www.sanantonio.gov/dtops)  
Phone: 210-207-3677

Director: Paula X. Stallcup

Assistant Directors: Colleen Swain & Kelly Rafferty

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