



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Save The Date! First Annual San Antonio World Heritage Festival

SAN ANTONIO (Aug. 18, 2016) – The City of San Antonio, in coordination with Bexar County, San Antonio River Authority (SARA), National Park Service, The Alamo, National Parks Conservation Association, Los Compadres, Las Misiones and the Rivard Report, is organizing a World Heritage Festival to be held Sept. 7-11, 2016. The festival will celebrate the first anniversary of the San Antonio Missions designation as a World Heritage Site. A full schedule of events is available at www.worldheritagefestival.org.

“It’s an extraordinary honor for our Spanish colonial missions to have been designated as a World Heritage site,” said Mayor Ivy R. Taylor. “With a vision of making San Antonio a globally competitive city, our Missions help put everything we do into historical and cultural context. I am excited that the festival will help celebrate our heritage, our Missions and the one-year anniversary of their global designation.”

The five-day festival kicks off Wednesday, Sept. 7, with a press conference at the National Park Service Visitor Center, located at Mission San José at 10 a.m.

“We are excited to celebrate the culmination of a nearly decade-long effort by the Bexar County Historical Commission to obtain the World Heritage designation for our Missions,” Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff said. “In addition to the bike ride and festivities in and around the Missions, I encourage residents to visit the Nuestra Historia exhibit to see some of the original documents from the Spanish settlers who established the Missions.”

As part of the Festival celebration, on Thursday, Sept. 8, at 6:30 p.m., the San Antonio River Authority and Bexar County will host an event celebrating the San Pedro Creek Project followed by the performance of an opera at 7:45 p.m. Additionally, the County is extending the closing date for the exhibit “Nuestra Historia – Our History: Spain in Bexar County” from Sept. 4 to Sept. 11.

Friday, Sept. 9 will feature the Office of Historic Preservation’s *Restored by Light* illuminating Mission San José beginning at 6:30 p.m. This family-friendly event will have children’s activities, tours, and performances by the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department’s *Take Note Youth Band* and *Fandango* dance troupe. The highlight of the evening will be the lighting of Mission San José which will be “restored” using projection technology.

Saturday, Sept. 10, provides a variety of activities for all ages and interests. Activities will take place at each of the Missions. The day will kick off at 8 a.m. with the *World Heritage Festival Tour de las Misiones* bike ride. Beginning at 9 a.m., the National Park Service and other festival partners will welcome riders, walkers, and runners to each Mission with free children's activities, interactive workshops, educational opportunities, and giveaways. At 10 a.m. the Office of Historic Preservation will host a tour of historic sites as part of its *San Antonio Preservation 5K Series*. Afterward, guests are invited to Mission Park Pavilion for *Mission Pachanga*, a live music evening celebration, hosted by the Rivard Report that will continue until 11 p.m.

"San Antonio is a city filled with immense history and culture. The World Heritage celebration weekend has something for everyone," said District 3 Councilwoman Rebecca J. Viagran. "We invite the entire community to celebrate San Antonio's unique legacy at the inaugural World Heritage Festival Sept. 7-11."

The festival will culminate with a celebratory mass at each Mission on Sept. 11 in recognition of the World Heritage designation. The proceeds from the event will support non-profit organizations and projects that preserve, maintain, promote, and connect the Missions to the river and other cultural heritage sites.

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One San Antonio

Diverse, internationally connected and globally competitive, San Antonio has a vibrant culture and economy and is consistently ranked among the fastest-growing cities in the United States. America's seventh-largest city offers opportunities in industries ranging from bioscience, financial services, aerospace, cybersecurity, energy and transportation manufacturing to healthcare. In 2016, San Antonio was named an All-America City by the National Civic League. We are "Military City USA," home to crucial military commands supported by a patriotic citizenry. We welcome 32.5 million visitors annually who inject \$13.4 billion annually into our economy, and UNESCO recently designated the city's Spanish colonial missions as a World Heritage Site. Celebrating its 300th anniversary in 2018, San Antonio is a city with a storied past and an even brighter future. For more information, visit www.sanantonio.gov.