

DOWNTOWN

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el centro

december 2008



Downtown Prepares for a Parade

Tree lighting kicks off celebration in San Jacinto Plaza

Downtown El Paso is again set to host a series of yuletide traditions, with tens of thousands expected to turn out on Dec. 6 for the Christmas Tree Lighting in San Jacinto Plaza and Holiday Lights Parade. The tree lighting and displays have been a tradition in the Plaza since 1936.

Crews from the City's Parks and Recreation Department have been working since early November on the decorations which adorn the Plaza, as well as putting up lights on the live 55-foot Christmas Tree and other fixtures. The Afghan Pine tree has been in San Jacinto since 1998, when it was donated by Corrine Boyce in memory of her late husband, Charles "Chuck" Boyce.

The tree is decorated with 5,000 light bulbs (amber, blue, green & red) and more than 500 ornaments were used to decorate the tree.

The other 16 trees inside the Plaza, 21 sidewalk trees and 11 palm trees are also lined with 350 bulbs each.

Other displays throughout the Plaza include 14 lighted stars on lamp posts with 100 bulbs each, 15 lighted arches with 108 bulbs each, an animated Santa, 10 3-D lighted reindeer and a life-size Nativity scene.

The festivities begin at 4:30 p.m. with performances by Fort Bliss' 62nd U.S. Army Band Brass Quintet and the Franciscanos Choir from St. Anthony's Seminary.

KVIA-TV Channel 7 anchor Estela Casas will serve as Master of Ceremonies and is scheduled to welcome the crowd at 5 p.m. Col. Ed Manning, Fort Bliss Garrison Commander, and Juarez Mayor Jose Reyes Ferriz are scheduled

to give holiday wishes during the ceremony. At approximately 5:50 p.m., El Paso Mayor John Cook and 8-year-old Krystal Morales of Candlelighters will flip the switch.

The tree lighting will mark the beginning of the Holiday Light Parade and arrival of Santa Claus. KVIA is hosting this year's events and will air it live from 4:30 p.m.-7 p.m. on CW Cable Channel 15 and stream it live online at kvia.com.

The public is also invited to the free Sounds of the Holiday concert series in the Plaza weekdays at 5 p.m. through Dec. 19. The schedule is as follows:

- Dec. 8 — Amanda Huante
- Dec. 9 — High Time Quartet
- Dec. 10 — Kristen Moreno
- Dec. 11 — Brittney Gamboa
- Dec. 12 — Bowie Dance Ensemble
- Dec. 15 — Wildcat Praise Band (St. Clements)
- Dec. 16 — Primera Iglesia Bautista Mexicana
- Dec. 17 — St. Paul United Methodist Church Praise Group
- Dec. 18 — Central Business Association Posada Night
- Dec. 19 — Jayden's Playground



Price Cut

The Morgan Stanley building at 641 N. Stanton St. is one of several projects in Downtown to receive reduced fees from City incentive programs.



Tree Lighting Info: (915) 373-6708
Parade Info: (915) 252-3310
Concert Info: (915) 544-5436/252-9031



December Events

Concert — El Paso Symphony Orchestra performs a family concert of traditional holiday music.

Where: Plaza Theatre

When: Sunday, Dec. 14 @ 2 p.m.

Cost: \$20

Info: (915) 532-3776 or 566-4066

Concert — The 62nd U.S. Army Band hosts its free annual holiday concert.

Where: Plaza Theatre

When: Dec. 17 from 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Info: (915) 568-6056 or 568-7001

Posada — The Central Business Association hosts its free annual *posada*, the Mexican holiday tradition commemorating the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Where: San Jacinto Plaza

When: Dec. 18 @ 5 p.m.

Info: (915) 533-2656

Business Spotlight: La Catrina

The lunchtime and nighttime options in Downtown El Paso have been expanded, following the summer opening of a new Mexican grill and cantina.

La Catrina, which translated means a female skeleton fully clad of ornamental garments, is based on a popular Mexican character that represents death as a celebration. The Mexican grill and cantina is located in a historic building at 317 E. Mills Ave. with a capacity of 160 people.



The restaurant offers a diverse menu of Mexican food, including flautas and tacos made with special handmade tortillas and salsas. In fact, as soon as you walk in, you can see the tortillas being made.

There is also a good selection of liquor and beer. During the weekends, the band La Sequoia

offers its own style of live Pop-Rock Spanish music after 9 p.m.

Every second Saturday of the month, La Catrina hosts Verse and Harmony Open Mic. The evenings of poetry and music begin at 7:30 p.m. Poet and musician sign-up begins at 7 p.m. More information on open mic can be found at verseandharmony.blogspot.com.

"La Catrina invites us to have fun in finding the pleasures of life because life is here and now," said owner Blanca Sapien. "Always present in the celebrations where death comes to life. That's how we want you to feel every time you visit us."

Where: 317 E Mills Ave.

When: Monday-Wednesday: 11 a.m.-12:00 a.m.

Thursday-Saturday: 11 a.m.-2 a.m.

Phone: (915) 546-9300



TIRZ Board of Directors

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Property Highlight: 310 N. Mesa St.

A Class A office building in the core of Downtown El Paso, the historic Cortez Building has more than 10,000 square feet of available space on four floors. Amenities include indoor parking, a security office on premises five days a week and building generator backup power. For more information, call (915) 838-3100.

To feature a Downtown building in *el centro*, send an email to rosalesv@elpasotexas.gov or call (915) 541-4670.



Meet the Board



Marc Bernat, TIRZ Board Member
Attorney, Gordon, Mott & Davis P.C.

Marc Bernat is a native El Pasoan who earned both a Bachelor of Arts and law degree from UT Austin. In the 1990s, he assisted others in consolidating the various factions Downtown into two unified groups — the Downtown Management District and the Central Business Association — and he continues to serve on the boards and as an officer. He has practiced law in El Paso since 1971 with his practice centered on commercial real estate and business and estate planning matters.

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