



Friday, November 28, 2008

Annual mariachi festival brings culture to life

San Antonio Business Journal - by [Andi Rodriguez](#)

Those without sombreros and guitars may feel a bit left out next week, as more than 15,000 mariachis descend upon the city for the 14th annual Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza. Cynthia Muñoz, whose firm Muñoz Public Relations (MPR) has spearheaded the Extravaganza for 14 consecutive years, speaks of the music festival with great pride, having nurtured it to its present level of success. But even traditions must be kept fresh and appealing, and Muñoz doesn't disappoint.

"This year, we've created quite a few new collaborative alliances," she says, "with a book author, [Trinity University](#) and a Norwegian film crew ... all who are a part of this year's Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza."

MPR also has produced Mariachi Vargas concerts in McAllen, Houston and Austin. Next year, the company plans to roll out an eight-market tour throughout the state due to the interest of major companies that are looking for ways to reach the Hispanic consumer at a grassroots level, says Muñoz. "The Mariachi Vargas concert gives sponsors the opportunity to have a personal connection with consumers with an event that has proven success in reaching multiple generations and various socio-economic levels," she adds.

Among her new connections, Muñoz is excited about a partnership with John Smith, an author of "The Best Mariachi in the World," a children's book about a young aspiring mariachi. "He'll participate in the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza via readings and help to promote higher education among Hispanic youth."

In addition, Zennor Film, a Norwegian-based film company with backing by one of Scandinavia's top producers, is filming a documentary in S.A. on cultural identity. A Mariachi Vargas presentation at Trinity University will also debut, thanks to Dante Suarez, an associate professor of Finance and International Business at the school. Suarez is spearheading a multiple-performance mariachi initiative on campus, including a special one with the Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan, a Mexico City based group that celebrates 111 years of mariachi music tradition this year. The seven-day festival will run Nov. 30 through Dec. 6. For more information, visit www.mariachimusic.com.

IABC

It's time for "Year in Review," International Association of Business Communicators' (IABC) annual luncheon program, now a popular holiday favorite among communicators, marketers and business professionals across San Antonio. Join some of San Antonio's media insiders from television, print and radio as they share which 2008 campaigns make up their list of "The Good, the Bad and the Newsworthy!"

IABC leaders stress that "...it's a fun and lighthearted way to learn from media professionals what works and didn't work and how to plan for trends of 2009." The Dec. 9 luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. at the Plaza Club; register online by Monday, Dec. 8 by visiting the calendar section at www.iabc-sanantonio.org.

CineFestival

Attention aspiring cinematographers; the [Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center](#) announces the 31st CineFestival call for entries. Communications specialist Lorraine Pulido-Ramirez says the CineFestival en San Antonio is the nation's oldest Latino film festival and will celebrate its 31th anniversary. The theme for this year's festival is "New World Onda: Building a Dynamic Media Society."

CineFestival is seeking the best Latino features, shorts, documentaries, animation, experimental films and youth works. The call for entries deadline is Dec. 8, 2008. The CineFestival kicks off Feb. 5, 2009.

Pulido-Ramirez explains that the four-day event will feature film screenings, workshops, panel discussions, networking opportunities, gala celebrations and musical performances. Sunday will be a seniors and family-friendly film day and innovative uses of new technology will also be highlighted through competitions, demonstrations of new cameras and software, and the involvement of youth filmmakers from video programs throughout San Antonio. For more info, log onto the CineFestival Web site at cinefestivalsa.org.

AWC

The San Antonio Chapter of the Association for Women in Communications (AWC) is currently promoting its annual membership drive, with an early adopter discount. AWC, celebrating its 60th year in San Antonio, strives to support all professionals in the communications field and provide educational and leadership opportunities for members.

Now until Dec. 31, AWC is opening its arms to new members waiving both the application fee and chapter fee — a \$75 savings. Join now and take advantage of paying only the national dues for a full-year membership.

Professional membership is available to women and men who work in the communications field or hold a professional communications degree. Visit www.womcom.org/membership/join.asp to learn about the membership categories. For more information, contact AWC San

Antonio Chapter President Mary Anthony at 508-0621 or e-mail her at maryant@sbcglobal.net.

Andi Rodriguez is a San Antonio-based free-lance writer and public relations professional. She can be contacted at andimediemarketing@sbcglobal.net.

All contents of this site © American City Business Journals Inc. All rights reserved.