

EL OBSERVADOR

St. Johns to Host Las Posadas Celebration

Tradition inspired by Christmas story

The St. Johns Posada, an annual event now in its third year, is being planned for Saturday, Dec. 15.

A candlelight procession will begin at 4:30 p.m. at St. Johns Plaza at North Burlington and Lombard. Visitors can expect live Latino music, dancing, piñata play, flower-making, face-painting and free traditional Latino and North American food and beverages.

Celebrate St. Johns' diverse culture and atmosphere, hosted by the businesses and organizations of St. Johns.

"Everyone will find something to enjoy," said Sarah Anderson, a key event organizer and owner of the local coffee shop Anna Bannanas.

The event is inspired by a unique holiday tradition of Las Posadas. In

Latin America, the posada procession, a symbolic representation of Joseph and Mary's search for shelter, is held during the eight nights leading up to Christmas.

Processions of children wind through village streets, stopping at houses and asking for posada, or shelter, and are turned away. Eventually a door is opened to them and they are invited in for a wonderful party.

The participants in the St. John's Posada procession are a choir from north Portland's George Middle School. The children — about 40 of them — are practicing a tuneful variety of Spanish and English holiday songs over the coming months, as part of a SUN schools after-school program. They will be adorned in costumes created by Pattie Dietz, the proprietor of St. Johns dining institution Pattie's Home Plate, and will be led by a volunteer choir director and George Middle School intern from the University of Portland, Laurie

Soderstrom.

This joint effort is further supported by downtown St. Johns businesses, which will play the role of refusing shelter to the carolers, but will offer them treats instead.

Families, friends and onlookers are invited to join the parade and partake of the holiday treats as well.

Festive musicians will serenade the crowd, and children of all ages will have a chance to break open a

piñata — one of several that will be handmade by kids with the support of NW Family Services, a sponsor of the event.

It's an important Latin American tradition with a light-hearted North

American twist. "Anyone who wants to celebrate the holidays in a unique way should come out to join the party," said Cornelius Swart, publisher of the St. Johns Sentinel, another event sponsor.



The Miracle Theatre Group presents Posada Milagro, a Christmas celebration with theatre, music and dance for the whole family.

Theatrical Christmas Celebration for Whole Family

Miracle Theatre Group invites the whole family to enjoy the Posada Milagro, to be celebrated Sunday, Dec. 16 between noon and 5 p.m. at El Centro Milagro, 525 S.E. Stark St.

The community celebration, reflecting upon the journey of Mary and Joseph in their search for refuge, will include youth ac-

tors of Miracle Theatre's Pluma Nueva program — together with members of the Teatro Español ensemble.

The afternoon's entertainment will also include feature music, dance, as well as arts and crafts workshops, a piñata and, of course, delicious traditional foods.

Due to last year's overwhelming demand, this year's celebration will include two Spanish language performances (2 and 4 p.m.) of the pastorela.

Admission is free, but limited to ticket-holders only. Tickets will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis beginning at noon on Sunday Dec. 16. Al-

though the event is free, donations of canned food will be accepted for the Oregon Food Bank.

The Miracle Theatre Group has been dedicated to bringing the vibrancy of Hispanic theatre to the Northwest community and beyond for more than 20 years. For more information, visit milagro.org or call 503-236-7253.

SALE!

SALE!

Boss Hogg Christmas Tree Lot

XMASTREES

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On the corner of MLK Jr. & Rosa Park Blvd.

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Missing and Exploited Children

1-800-THE-LOST

Endangered-Missing

Lost, Injured, Missing

ANITA HERRERA
Current Age: 15

Date Missing: October 27, 2007
Missing From: Coolidge, AZ

Anita and Destiny were last seen in the company of an unknown adult male and adult female. The police believe they may have been taken to Mexico.

DESTINY ZUBIA
Current Age: 11 months
(1st birthday on Nov. 25th)

If you have any information please contact:
The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678)

This public service announcement provided by the Portland Observer Newspaper.

Glass Artist Featured at Onda

Onda Gallery, 2215 N.E. Alberta St. hosts an exhibit through Dec. 24 by Ecuadorian glass artist Ana Maria Torres.

Torres designs sculptural and decorative pieces with elements from pre-Columbian motifs. She finds inspiration in her cultural tradition and creates contemporary fused glass art, uniting the past and present. Natural elements - earth, wind, fire and water - and religious images are also recurring themes in her work.

Ana Maria Torres was born in Esmeraldas, Ecuador, in 1968. After completing a program in graphic design from the Metropolitan Design School in Quito (1990), she started working in her family's business CeramiCarma, where she developed her techniques in design

On NE ALBERTA Street

A Nativity scene made of glass by Ecuadorian artist Ana Marie Torres.

Liberal Leader Accepts Venezuela Vote

(AP) — Humbled by his first electoral defeat ever, Venezuela President Hugo Chavez said Monday he may have been too ambitious in asking voters to let him stand indefinitely for re-election and endorse a huge leap to a socialist state.

"I understand and accept that the proposal I made was quite profound and intense," he said after voters narrowly rejected the sweeping constitutional reforms by 51 percent to 49 percent.

Opposition activists were ecstatic as the results were announced shortly after midnight — with 88 percent of the vote counted, the trend was declared irreversible by elections council chief Tibisay Lucena.

Some shed tears. Others began chanting: "And now he's going away!"

Without the overhaul, Chavez will be barred from running again in 2012.

Foes of the reform effort —

including Roman Catholic leaders, media-freedom groups, human-rights groups and prominent business leaders — said it would have granted Chavez unchecked power and imperiled basic rights.

Chavez told reporters at the presidential palace that the outcome of Sunday's balloting had taught him that "Venezuelan democracy is maturing." His respect for the verdict, he asserted, proves he is a true democratic leader.

Hugo Chavez

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