Annual Festival of Lights Illuminates Downtown

The AAA Four Diamond, Historic Mission Inn Hotel & Spa pays homage to the holidays with its five-week Festival of Lights, a holiday celebration featuring one of the nation’s largest displays of dazzling lights. The celebration is kicked off with the highly anticipated Switch-on Ceremony on Friday, November 28th in which the castle-like, historic hotel is instantly illuminated with more than 4 million holiday lights followed by a full fireworks display.


Highlights of The Mission Inn’s Festival of Lights include appearances by Santa Claus; the world’s largest manmade mistletoe measuring 12’ x 8’; horse-drawn carriage rides; fresh snow; an elaborately decorated Christmas tree in the hotel’s lobby; and delectable holiday confections at the original Casey’s Cupcakes location within The Inn. In addition, the City of Riverside provides a number of holiday themed activities during the Festival of Lights including an outdoor ice skating rink, specialty food vendors, and family friendly entertainment.

The Mission Inn’s Festival of Lights, by the numbers:

- More than 4 million enchanting holiday lights
- 250,000 plus visitors from all over the world in 2013
- More than 400 animated figures including angels, elves and carolers
- 10 weeks of round-the-clock preparations orchestrated by a crew of 20

“For twenty-two years it has brought us tremendous joy in presenting The Mission Inn’s Festival of Lights to this wonderful Inland Southern California community,” said Festival Founders and Keepers of the Inn, Duane and Kelly Roberts. “Each Festival of Lights at The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa is bigger than the one before and the event remains free as an experience families can enjoy together. Every year The Inn’s festival gains new energy, grows in popularity, and ushers in an increasing number of visitors to the Riverside area. Countless thousands of individuals make the yearly trek to The Mission Inn’s Festival of Lights we are both honored and delighted to welcome every single guest to The Inn.”

A Four Diamond property, the hotel features 238 guest rooms including 27 suites, and four restaurants; Duane’s Prime Steaks and Seafood, Bella Trattoria Italian Bistro, Las Campanas Mexican Cuisine & Cantina, and The Mission Inn Restaurant and Spanish Patio. The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa also features 54° at Duane’s, Casey’s Cupcakes / Wedding Cupcakes and The Presidential Lounge.

From the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa
Press Release
The City of Riverside’s strong manufacturing sector represents some of the world’s most advanced technologies from injection molding and food safety preparation to medical device manufacturing and products for the Aerospace industry. In fact, Riverside is currently home to approximately 257 manufacturing facilities that employ over 6,000 people. According to the latest Regional Intelligence Report by Beacon Economics, the industry is likely to experience continued growth. Riverside’s strategic location and high concentration of skilled manufacturing workers will attract prospective companies in need of warehouse and manufacturing space, especially in light of the increased net export volume at the nearby port terminals of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Demographic trends support the case for advanced manufacturing growth as well. Riverside is home to four institutions of higher learning and offers a relatively affordable housing market. The City is an attractive destination for younger adults who represent the long term future of our skilled workforce. People between the ages of 20 and 34 comprise 26.5% of Riverside’s population, compared with only 22.8% and 25.1% for California and the City of Los Angeles, respectively. From 2010 to 2012, the City of Riverside saw this same demographic grow in size by 4.5%, compared to only 3.5% for California.

The local industrial market also indicates growth in the industrial sector, showing a steady progression, with rental rates increasing nearly 1% over the last quarter to $4.79 per square foot. Over the last year, rental rates in the City of Riverside and throughout the Inland Empire have grown by roughly 4.0% while vacancy rates have started to decline.

With a lower cost of living and doing business than surrounding counties, strategic proximity to vital California markets and a growing workforce, Riverside is poised to remain a manufacturing hub for Southern California.

The Give BIG 24-hour online fundraising campaign is coming to Riverside County this fall, giving nonprofit organizations a high-profile way to boost donations and to learn some new skills in fundraising and donor engagement.

The Give BIG campaigns have had great success in San Bernardino County earlier this year and in the City of Riverside over the past two years, raising over $500,000 in San Bernardino County and $520,000 total in the City of Riverside. Now organizers are expanding the Give BIG Riverside event countywide to become Give BIG Riverside County. The event is timed to coincide with National Philanthropy Week and will be on Nov. 13th, from midnight to 11:59 P.M.

The Community Foundation, which organized both of the other Give BIG campaigns, is teaming up with the Regional Access Project Foundation, based in Palm Desert, and the Corona Chamber of Commerce to run Give BIG Riverside County.

“The Regional Access Project Foundation is joining The Community Foundation in bringing this fundraising opportunity to our nonprofit community,” says Leticia De Lara, CEO of Regional Access Project Foundation. “This is a creative and innovative way to reach out to potential donors who want to support their favorite nonprofit.”

Using social media and aggressive outreach, the Give BIG

Riverside Poised for Growth

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City of Riverside Office of Economic Development
www.riversideoed.com
The Riverside School of the Arts at the Cesar Chavez Community Center.

A program that encourages our youth to explore, create and classes to our local youth. Come out to show your support for 5th at 6:00 PM

IN GIVE BIG RIVERSIDE:
5419 or asmelendrez@riversideca.gov
contact the office of Councilman Melendrez at (951)-826-

Three Part Lecture Series on “Sustainable Living” hosted in Ward 2:

Beginning November 6th, I will be hosting a series of lecture presentations with the first topic of discussion on genetically modified organisms, also known as GMO’s. The lecture will be providing information in reference to the discussions surrounding GMO’s and how they affect us in our lives today, with the program titled, “GMOs: What’s in the seed?”

Panelists will be sharing their perspectives and answering questions from the audience at all lectures. The first lecture will be followed by two other presentations at a later date on waste and climate change. I expect the will take around 30 days. This should give some time for the new Interim City Manager to work side by side with Scott for a while to get fully up to speed before taking over.

The Council is interested in learning what the community would like to see in a City Manager and City Attorney. To this end individuals and businesses are asked to take a survey through the city website at www.riversideca.gov

The survey results will be provided to the recruiter and the City Council to assist in the recruitment and selection process. Please help us by taking the survey.

Some have suggested that the current strife amongst councilmembers, and the fact that the June 2015 election will have four council seats up for election, raising the possibility of a new council majority being elected shortly after a new person would start, might keep good candidates from applying. This is possible but I think Riverside has enough to offer to attract top candidates in spite of these issues. We are a growing city of over 300,000 residents. We have our own electric and water utilities and our own police and fire departments. Most of the city is not dependent on imported water supplies and our utility rates are low. We have a balanced budget of nearly a billion dollars and good financial ratings.

My hope is that we will have great new employees in both positions in the first quarter of 2015. If it turns out we don’t get great candidates we can recruit again after the June elections when the majority of the councilmembers will be known. We might have one or two runoffs but four are extremely unlikely.

Mike Gardner

Happy Fall Greetings to everyone in Ward 2 and the City of Riverside!

SUPPORT THE RIVERSIDE SCHOOL OF THE ARTS IN GIVE BIG RIVERSIDE: The Riverside School of the Arts will be holding a cocktail reception benefit on November 5th at 6:00 PM at the Cesar Chavez Community Center. The programs at the School of the Arts provide art and music classes to our local youth. Come out to show your support for a program that encourages our youth to explore, create and reach their full potential. Any donations are appreciated and will help us reach our goal, please visit the website, www.razoo.com (search for Riverside Community Services Foundation) and make a difference in a child’s life! The instrument drive is going strong as we have continued to receive instrument donations from the community, please continue to spread the word and thank you to those who have contributed! For any questions please contact Clarissa at ccervantes@riversideca.gov.

Congratulations to the University California Riverside on their unveiling of the new School of Public Policy! The UCR School of Public Policy will take a global approach to addressing regional and local policy challenges, said Anil Deolalikar, Dean of the School. Most important, he said, is the emphasis on training policymakers, policy analysts and policy practitioners who will stay and serve in Southern California. The University’s newest professional school is accepting applications for fall 2015 enrollment in the Master of Public Policy program. For more information visit their webpage at http://spp.ucr.edu/
Your Downtown Business Improvement District

On October 8th, the Board of Directors of the Riverside Downtown Partnership (RDP) approved the Annual Report for the renewal of the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement District (Downtown BID) levy for the upcoming calendar year. The activities of the Downtown BID are funded by this levy which is equal to 100% of the annual business tax levied by the City of Riverside and assessed on all businesses within the BID boundaries. The City collects the levy on behalf of the Downtown BID and provides up to $100,000 of matching money annually for improvements downtown.

The Annual Report has been submitted to the City for City Council and the required public hearing to review the report and approve continuation of the Business Improvement District levy has been set for 3 pm on Tuesday, November 18th. The City sends out notices to all businesses in the Downtown BID to advise them of the date and time of the public hearing. The Annual Report has been posted on the RDP website, www.riversidedowntown.org under the Business Improvement District heading, for businesses to review in its entirety prior to the public hearing.

RDP has administered the Downtown BID since its establishment in 1986. RDP works with the City and with other organizations to best utilize available resources and to work towards the effective implementation of programs and activities funded by the Downtown BID in six specific areas: parking, beautification, public events, music in public places, promotion of business activities, and security. The activities, improvements, and any new efforts being recommended for the year 2015 are based on 2014 programs and initiatives that are part of the Strategic Plan for 2014 to 2016 approved by the RDP Board of Directors.

RDP has allocated $15,000 for parking activities in 2015 which includes $9,000 allocated for the discount token program. Other parking activities include maps to assist visitors, patrolling of downtown parking garages and lots through the Ambassador Program, and input to the City on specific issues.

RDP has allocated $7,500 for partnerships with other groups such as the Riverside Arts Council on beautification efforts such as murals in 2015.

RDP has allocated $12,500 in 2015 for public event activities including the popular summer event Movies on Main. Other activities include funding and support for a number of third party events, and promoting events through a monthly calendar, website and emails, print advertising, press releases, and editorial opportunities in newspapers and magazines. In addition to the $12,500 allocation of BID levy to public event activities, $14,250 of the City matching BID funds is also allocated.

RDP has allocated $20,000 in 2015 for music in public places activities including the outdoor concert in August, Summer Street Jam, and the lunchtime concert series, Concerts at City Hall, that will run for eight weeks in June and July.

RDP has allocated $180,000 for promotion of business activities in 2015. These activities include the destination marketing campaign with print ads in targeted markets, press releases to various media outlets, editorial content on downtown activities in selected magazines, a monthly newsletter, and a website promoting downtown and its attractions, and spotlighting local businesses. The activities also include providing both the Downtown Pocket and Dining Guide and the Historic Downtown Riverside Walking Guide free to downtown visitors, as well as providing them for downloading from the RDP website, www.downtownriverside.org. They also include providing the special dining guide targeted toward patrons of the Fox Performing Arts Center and the Riverside Municipal Auditorium that shows downtown restaurants in proximity to both venues and categorizes them by pre and post show offerings.

As part of its Strategic Plan for promotion of business activities, RDP produces several seasonal events to draw visitors in targeted demographic groups to downtown Riverside. These events are the Easter Egg-stravaganza for families and the Riverside Zombie Crawl. While the Easter event was held in 2014, there were four other events held with similar names causing confusion so the event will not be held in 2015 and funds redirected to other promotional activities. However the Riverside Zombie Crawl has been extremely successful, attracting over 900 participants in 2014. The event will be held in 2015 and expanded further.

RDP's retail initiative was launched in 2012 to build the brand of downtown Riverside as a destination fashion district for the Inland Empire and to promote downtown retailers and salons. The initiative includes spring and fall fashion shows highlighting downtown retailers and salons, and a partnership with Riverside City College's Cosmetology school for hair and makeup, giving students practical experience on models.

RDP's restaurant initiative was launched in June 2013 to raise awareness of downtown Riverside as a dining destination and to encourage patrons to visit downtown restaurants during the slower summer months. In 2014 the City of Riverside, the Arlington Business Partnership, and the RDPBIA partnered to expand the promotion city wide. The significant online and radio advertising resulted in millions of digital and Pandora impressions and was very effective in raising awareness of Riverside as a dining destination. The promotion will be continued in 2015 by the three partners.

RDP also works to promote business activities by building business capacity through workshops, seminars, and other initiatives. RDP in partnership with the California Baptist University launched the Downtown Intern Program in November 2013. The first session of the program included over 20 downtown businesses who benefited by having an intern assist with their marketing and social media efforts. The second session of the Downtown Intern Program was offered in the latter part of 2014 with a further 12 businesses participating. The program will be continued in 2015.

RDP also works with partners such as the City of Riverside and the Arlington Business Partnership to offer workshops and seminars of interest and information to businesses. The partnerships also include joint promotions such as the Shop Small Shop Local promotion planned for Small Business
The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) reminds last-minute holiday shoppers to keep safety in mind as they hunt for those last-minute bargains.

The organization best known for its icon, McGruff the Crime Dog, has tips to help you shop safely while getting those great holiday bargains.

**Shopping in Stores**
- Do not buy more than you can carry. Plan ahead by taking a friend with you or ask a store employee to help you carry your packages to the car.
- Save all receipts. Print and save all confirmations from your online purchases. Start a file folder to keep all receipts together and to help you verify credit card or bank statements as they come in.
- Consider alternate options to pay for your merchandise, such as onetime or multiuse disposable credit cards or money orders, at online stores and auction sites.
- Wait until asked before taking out your credit card or checkbook. An enterprising thief would love to shoulder surf to get your account information.
- Tell a security guard or store employee if you see an unattended bag or package. The same applies if you are using mass transit.

**Walking to and From Your Car**
- Deter pickpockets. Carry your purse close to your body or your wallet inside a coat or front trouser pocket.
- Have your keys in hand when approaching your vehicle. Check the back seat and around the car before getting in.
- Do not leave packages visible in your car windows. Lock them in the trunk or, if possible, take them directly home.

**Shopping with Small Children**
- If you are shopping with children, make a plan in case you are separated from each other.
  - Select a central meeting place.
  - Teach them to know they can ask mall personnel or store security employees if they need help.

**Shopping Online**
- Before surfing the Internet, secure your personal computers by updating your security software. Everyone's computer should have anti-virus, anti-spyware, and anti-spam software, as well as a good firewall installed. Visit www.bytecrime.org for free software downloads.
- Keep your personal information private and your password secure. Do not respond to requests to "verify" your password or credit card information unless you initiated the contact. Legitimate businesses will not contact you in this manner.
- Beware of "bargains" from companies with whom you are unfamiliar—if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!
- Use secure websites for purchases. Look for the icon of a locked padlock at the bottom of the screen or "https" in the URL address.
- Shop with companies you know and trust. Check for background information if you plan to buy from a new or unfamiliar company.

To find more useful shopping tips and personal safety information, visit the National Crime Prevention Council’s website.

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**SECURITY CORNER**

**Tips for Holiday Shopping**

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**Shop Local Business Spotlight**

**Sweet Epies**

Check out the article at http://www.riversidedowntown.org/buy-local/

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**Business Spotlight**
How to Boost Your Bottom Line

The goal for most small business owners is to build up a consistent and steady level of income that is sustainable for a long period of time. However, there may still be times when you need a larger than normal influx of cash even if you achieve this.

Imagine that you need to update your technology, or buy new equipment, or invest in education and skill development. These are a few possible situations when you need access to money you may not have in your regular budget. In order to make it work without falling behind financially, you will need to plan in advance for your upcoming investment by building up your cash reserves.

Here are a few ways to boost your bottom line relatively quickly:

**Diversify**

Take a look at your most popular products and services and consider where you might be able to add complementary services that will increase your income. If you’ve been collecting client feedback (and you should be!), use the information you’ve gathered to identify additional areas where you can diversify.

You may also want to increase your knowledge and skills in certain areas to make yourself more marketable to a larger or different target audience.

**Outsource Work**

It may seem counterproductive to pay someone else to complete work for you when you’re trying to boost your bottom line, but it can actually be a very effective approach. Think about the necessary tasks that eat away at your time -- bookkeeping, social media monitoring, contact management, other administrative tasks. If you were to outsource those tasks to a virtual assistant or a part-time employee, you would reclaim time that you can spend on doing what you’re good at -- pleasing clients and customers and selling more of your products and services.

**Do a Financial Audit**

When was the last time you reviewed all of your business accounts to see what you’re spending on ongoing expenses, and exactly where those funds are going? Conduct an internal financial audit to see what you can cut immediately to save on your bottom line.

Keep an eye open for recurring payments; they can be easily forgotten when they automatically hit your account every month or every year. Some services allow you to defer your subscriptions temporarily, or leave and come back at a later time, so you may want to explore those options as well.

**Consider Open Source**

Most of us use the best software available for what we do, and those top-of-the-line options often come with a big price tag. While I wouldn’t recommend replacing all of your brand name software with free alternatives, there are some great open source applications that make adequate alternatives -- perhaps on a second computer.

Open source software is attractive for many business owners because it typically requires no financial investment and frequently has the flexibility to fit perfectly within your needs. One of the most popular open-source tools available is OpenOffice.org, an office software suite with word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, graphics, databases and more.

**Raise Your Rates**

Raising your rates is not necessarily a quick fix to money challenges, but it can be one way to achieve a fiscally healthy business. Assuming you have the skills and experience to justify a rate increase, you can raise your rates across the board, or incrementally starting with new clients, in order to increase your income.

Money is something you have a lot of control over in your small business. When you give yourself enough time to identify your financial goals, and develop a plan to increase your income, it is entirely possible to boost your bottom line quickly by using the approaches above.

Information from Alyssa Gregory, About.com Small Business Guide

Visit [http://sbinformation.about.com](http://sbinformation.about.com) for more small business information and to sign up for their newsletters

### Community Merchants USA Offers Electronic Payment Card Resources to Small Businesses

Community Merchants USA (CMUSA) is a non-commercial organization that seeks to educate small business owners on the value of electronic payments. CMUSA offers free resources, webinars and live events to help business owners understand how payment acceptance can help in starting, managing and growing a business. The URL is [communitymerchantsUSA.com](http://communitymerchantsUSA.com).

CMUSA assists businesses in managing card payment processing costs, shopping around for payment services and preventing card fraud. It offers advice on accepting payments online, card acceptance discount programs and mobile payments acceptance.

### RDP Welcomes New Businesses to Downtown

- Anam Cara Yoga
- Dolores Rodriguez Hair, Nails, and Skin Care
- Pick and Sickle Retail
- Piglett and Zott Antiques
- R3 Associates LLC
- Robles Antiques
- Thomas Schmierer Professional Services
- Wellington’s Holistic
**HELP YOUR BUSINESS SUCCEED**

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<td>Apps for Business &amp; Payment Solutions</td>
<td>Business Tool: SizeUp Back to the Grind</td>
<td>Debunking the Myths of Small Business, Michael Gerber</td>
<td>• ADA: What You Need to Know, Brian Pearcy, Attorney RPU Orange Street Board Room</td>
<td>• Prospecting Locations Daily Brew 2955 Van Buren Blvd</td>
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<td>• Marketing: Targeting Your Audience Kraemer’s Coffee Bistro 6734 Brockton Ave 3 AM - 5 PM</td>
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For a detailed description of each event, visit RiversideOED.com

All locations are within the City of Riverside
Roy Hord Volunteer of the Year Award Nominations

The late Roy Hord was a former RDP board member who faithfully served the community of Riverside for over 25 years. RDP established the Volunteer of the Year Award in his memory in 2003. The award is given to those individuals who exemplify his spirit of volunteerism and presented each year at RDP’s Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony which takes place in February.

RDP is currently accepting nominations for this award. Nominees should be dedicated to the community and have a history of volunteerism, particularly with youth. Past recipients include the Hord family, Bill Gardner, Doug Shackelton, Barb Purvis, Gerry Bowden, Dell Roberts, Nanci Larsen, Debbie Guthrie, Henry W. Coil, Jr., Suzanne Ashley, Kathy Wright, and Margo Chabot.

Nomination forms can be downloaded from the RDP website, www.riversidedowntown.org and should be sent to: Riverside Downtown Partnership, 3666 University Avenue, Suite 100, Riverside, CA 92501. Nominations can also be emailed in a PDF format to Janice@riversidedowntown.org. The deadline for nominations is Friday, January 2, 2015.