

Museo del Westside now part of annual *Paseo por el Westside*

When we celebrate the 16th annual *Paseo por el Westside* this year at the *Rinconcito de Esperanza* at 816 S. Colorado St., the new *Museo del Westside* will be open for the public to glimpse at a couple of exhibits and the promise of more to come as the Museo develops into a fully functioning museum. The Museo will tell the story of the historic Westside of San Antonio with *Gente Potente*, powerful people from its neighborhoods who achieved great things with creativity, compassion and cultural ingenuity. The list of folks with ties to the historic Westside of San Antonio is endless and the stories being documented in monthly sessions on *Second Saturdays* at the *Casa de Cuentos* continues. Aside from the oral histories the community has brought to the Esperanza, countless photos and images of Westside life from early in the 20th century that includes working class life, the cultural arts, labor, politics, religion, music, and much more that has been collected. If that is not enough to boggle the mind, the community has generated artifacts from different eras and lifestyles including original signs that hung at tienditas, clinics, and other places and fixtures and objects used in homes and businesses of the Westside. Imagine the amount of archival material that this one small neighborhood museum will ultimately generate!

When the *Paseo por el Westside* began in 2010, Westside residents were organizing to save the “pink building” at 1312 Guadalupe that was in danger of being demolished. The *Maldonado* building was ultimately

preserved. Since then there have been some buildings and sites that have been saved and others, like the *Univision* building that were not. Organizations like the *Westside Preservation Alliance* continue to advocate for Westside preservation. The latest casualty of development is the historic building of the *Texas Institute of Cultures*—a victim of *Project Marvel*.

As the Esperanza began to develop a site on the Westside of San Antonio now known as *El Rinconcito de Esperanza*, it became increasingly clear that preservation of buildings was not enough. After acquiring *Rubén's Ice House*, Westside residents along with the Reyes family who sold the ice house to Esperanza began to visualize the possibility of developing a museum. With more pláticas, more photos and more artifacts—it became clear that what was needed at this site that includes a *Casa de Cuentos*, *La Casita*, and the new *MujerArtes Clay Cooperative* was a *Museo del Westside*. With the renovation of *Rubén's* completed, additional improvements have been made. A handmade tin piñata with 7 points has been added to grace the side entrance of the expanded building and grass has been planted to begin landscaping efforts. Poco a poquito, the dream of a fully functioning *Museo del Westside* is being realized. Join us on Saturday, May 24th at the *Rinconcito de Esperanza*, 816 S. Colorado St. from 10am to 3pm and celebrate *El Museo* and *El Paseo por el Westside*! ¡Alla nos vemos! See you there!

Esperanza began renovations of Rubén's Ice House by adding a new metal roof (left). Now completely renovated, as *Museo del Westside*, it includes an expansion towards the back of the original Rubén's with a side entrance (see front cover photo).





The Rinconcito de Esperanza located on the Westside of San Antonio now includes the Museo del Westside as depicted in Mary Agnes Rodríguez's artwork.

