

Community Building on Paseo Boricua

Community Effort Brings Three Kings Day Tradition to Life



and by whether it was intended for a boy or a girl, ensuring that every child would receive something meaningful and appropriate. The donations themselves reflected a true collective effort, coming from individual community members as well as organizations committed to supporting local families.



All of this preparation led to the Three Kings Day celebration held on January 6 along Division Street, where children and families gathered to take part in a tradition deeply rooted in Puerto Rican culture. More than just a gift giveaway, the event served as a reminder of the power of community, cultural pride, and collective care. Behind every wrapped present was time, intention, and love—proof that when a community comes together, it can create moments of joy that last far beyond a single day.

By Wesley Ordoñez

In the days leading up to Three Kings Day, the spirit of community was already alive and thriving on Chicago's West Side. Volunteers from the Puerto Rican Cultural Center (PRCC), alongside neighbors and supporters, came together for an extraordinary effort to prepare gifts for local children in celebration of the beloved holiday. The preparation took place over several days at WEPA Mercado del Pueblo, where tables, floors, and storage areas were filled with generosity and purpose.

Under the leadership of Glenda Guzman, volunteers carefully wrapped and organized thousands of donated gifts. Boxes were stacked high, large storage totes overflowed, and numerous bags brimmed with wrapped presents ready for distribution. Each gift was thoughtfully sorted by age group

Holiday Joy on “La Division”: Celebrating the 19th Annual Paseo Boricua Parranda



by Juanita García Avilés

This year we celebrated the 19th Annual Paseo Boricua Parranda. Hundreds of Boricuas joined this joyous event that helped spread so much holiday cheer. Traditions such as this keep us rooted in our culture and community, and force us to appreciate each other, the organizations that help support us, the restaurants that feed us, the musicians that keep us in constant movement and the community that reminds us that we belong here. Thanks to Hispanic Housing for hosting

us, Alderperson Fuentes and Representative Jiménez for supporting and promoting the parranda, La Escuelita Bombera De Corazón and Ivelisse for saying presente and leading the parranda, and to the Puerto Rican Cultural Center for their half century of advocacy and struggle to ensure that Boricuas in Chicago have a pedacito de patria on our beloved Division. A very special thanks to all the businesses on Paseo Boricua for welcoming the parranda and generously sharing a variety of treats with us.

Next year will be the 20th Paseo Boricua Parranda and we will celebrate with style. If you are interested in helping organize the 20th, email paseoboricuaparranda@gmail.com



VPI Program: Dope Drip hosts food giveaway with Bears QB Caleb Williams



by Jacob Diaz

On December 20, Caleb Williams delivered a game-winning touchdown at Soldier Field against the Green Bay Packers. The following day, Williams continued to make an impact off the field, joining forces with Lyrical Lemonade to distribute meals to the Humboldt Park community along Division Street at Dope Drip Cafe.

Also in attendance was Chicago Cubs standout Pete Crow-Armstrong, further highlighting the citywide support behind the event. The joy and

gratitude were evident on the faces of everyone who attended, as the gathering brought together residents, athletes, and community leaders in a meaningful way.

From Chicago at large to the heart of Humboldt Park, this event served as a reminder of the power of giving back. Community members expressed appreciation and optimism for the years ahead, cheering on these individuals who continue to unite and uplift the city beyond the spotlight.

A Sweet Day Downtown With Reina's Cakes



by La Voz Staff

One afternoon, Reina sat at a table in her cakes shop, playing board games with the young people who had made the space their own. As they laughed and talked, she asked whether they would want to take a trip downtown to see the

Christmas lights—or to visit the Bean—and was struck by how many of them had never gone. The idea landed in her mind with quiet certainty: it would be more than an outing; it would be an experience they could carry, a bright memory to return to later.



Watching them, she felt the familiar pull of responsibility and community—the desire to make a difference, to give something back, and to remind them that they mattered and that their ideas deserved room to grow. She shaped the plan with them so they were invested in it.

The shop, in turn, had become a refuge: a safe place where the youth looked out for one another, encouraged each other, and gathered as if it were a second home. As a result of the trip, Reina began planning a spring car wash to help high school seniors manage expenses—especially those carrying the weight of large families—because she understood their challenges clearly. They had become family, and was a privilege to have a place in their lives.