



Mothers' Influences are EVERYWHERE

By Denise Richter

Mother's Day is always the second Sunday in May, and this year's celebration falls on May 17. Settling for just one day seems silly, though, when you can celebrate the whole month, enjoying the many places in San Antonio that honor mothers and their enduring contributions.

The Briscoe Western Art Museum holds a special place in the heart of Uvalde resident Jan Elliott, a mother of six, who helped bring the museum to life. She and her husband were friends of the Briscoes, and their families owned land next to each other for more than 150 years. Jan, who considers San Antonio a second home, works as a docent at the museum, and her daughter, Jessica, serves as the museum board's chair.

"I don't think you can look at anything at the Briscoe without a mother's involvement," said Jan. "All of the people who settled Texas had strong maternal ties. Native Americans. Irish. French. German. Mexican. Spanish. In the art, I see a maternal influence. Detailed. Intricate. Delicate. Obviously loving."

One of Jan's favorite pieces that demonstrates this loving attention is a Blackfoot War Shirt that's made of white leather with fringe and beads.



Clockwise from top right: San Antonio Zoo, Briscoe Museum - Mama Javaleina and Babies, SAMA Monkey With Her Young, Briscoe Museum - Sacagawea and Baby.

"I think about the family unit, which has always been the strength of any culture. The mother is the main thread who holds everything together," said Jan.

Check out a Buckaroo Bag to enhance your children's exploration and play. Don't miss the outdoor sculpture "Bird Woman" by R.V. Greeves. Bird Woman is the translation of Sacagawea, the guide and translator for Lewis and Clark, who packed her infant son, Jean Baptiste, on her back throughout their travels.

The Briscoe's Summer Film Series will feature Women of the West this year. Joan Crawford kicks off the series with the 1954 film "Johnny Guitar" on Tuesday, May 9, at 6:30 p.m. Food truck fare and free beer will also be on hand.

Baby animals abound this time of year in the San Antonio Zoo. Check out Maya, a mother Gibbons, who had a baby nestled on her chest

while she groomed her older child. Suzy, a Black Mangabey, was busy nursing her infant, and Clara, a Wolf's Guenon, chilled while her baby played. Three Howler siblings cut up while their mom and dad napped. Jaguar cubs, Liam and Milan, frolicked while their mother, Arizona, watched, and lion cub, Axelle, and her mom, Sarabi, entertained visitors with their powerful vocalizations.

The zoo is a favorite hangout for many, but especially new moms pushing strollers filled with their offspring. The Tiny Tot Nature Spot gives wee ones a chance to learn while they play while their moms visit on nearby benches.

Buy a cup of nectar for \$2 to feed the colorful Lories, Australian parrots. The photos taken of you and your children with these charming birds will be treasured forever. The Bug Mania exhibit opens May 26 and continues through Labor Day.

African Birthing Pot at Ripley's





John Singer Sargent painting at SAMA

You'll find mothers throughout the San Antonio Museum of Art's 30,000 objects that span 5,000 years of history. One vase, in the form of a monkey with her young dates back to 2278-2184 B.C. You'll also find a small marble statue of the goddess Venus with her son Cupid that is from the 2nd-4th century A.D. A Ming-Qing Dynasty jar and vase from the mid-17th century feature mothers and children at play, and Diego Rivera's 1926 "La Siesta" captures a mother napping with her children.

Margaret Louisa Vanderbilt (Mrs. Eliot Fitch Shepard), a mother of six, reigns proudly over the American gallery on the museum's first floor. Painted by John Singer Sargent, one of the leading portrait artists of all time. Be sure to pick up "10 Things To Do With Kids" at the front desk.

SAMA offers an Art Crawl for babies, ages zero to 18 months, every second Thursday of the month from 10 to 10:45 a.m., and Playdates for kids, ages 2 to 4, every Wednesday, from 10 to 10:45 a.m.

First Sundays for Families is from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for all ages. Dreamtime Art will be explored the first Sunday in May. Self-Guided Family Tours for ages 6 and up allows parents and children to explore Ancient Art, Latin American Art and Asian Art at your own pace.

Ripley's Believe It or Not has a medieval mother-prevention device in its collection: a chastity belt. They also feature an African Birthing Pot

used by the Dogon People of Mali, Africa, and a miniature nativity scene with Mary, Joseph and Jesus painted on a wafer-like canvas made of soap, water and spider webs.

Rachael M. Garza, Director of Marketing for Rio San Antonio Cruises, has worked on the San Antonio River for 23 years. She said it has been a joy to share the river with her daughters, ranging in age from 23 to 2. She loves spending hours with her girls, enjoying the river's waterfalls and gardens.

As you enjoy your guided tour of the River Walk onboard Rio San Antonio Cruises, give thanks to Rena Maverick Green, a widowed mother of four who was one of the founders of the San Antonio Conservation Society. She and Emily Edwards were instrumental in saving the river from being paved over and turned into a drainage ditch after a terrible flood in 1921.

During the month of May, take the time to thank the mothers, blood relatives or not, who've made a difference in your life.

Denise Barkis Richter, Ph.D., author of "100 Things To Do in San Antonio Before You Die," has been blogging about San Antonio at sanantoniotourist.net since June of 2010. Her love affair with the Alamo City began at HemisFair in 1968. Denise credits her mother for her sense of adventure and optimism. She hopes she has passed those traits along to her daughter.



Amanda Boyd with daughter at the San Antonio Zoo

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Briscoe Western Art Museum
Briscoemuseum.org
 210 W. Market St.

San Antonio Zoo
SAzoo.org
 3903 N. St. Mary's St.

San Antonio Museum of Art
SAMuseum.org
 200 West Jones Ave.

Ripley's Believe It or Not
Ripleys.com/sanantonio
 301 Alamo Plaza

Rio San Antonio Cruises
RioSanAntonio.com

Rio San Antonio Cruises has four locations to purchase tickets:

- Market Street Bridge at Alamo Street
- Shops at Rivercenter on the river level
- Aztec Theatre on the river level
- Lock and Dam near the Brooklyn Street Bridge

The 35-minute narrated tours are daily from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. Tickets are \$10 or \$4 for children ages 1-5 and \$7 for senior citizens ages 60 and above and U.S. Military. Bexar County residents may purchase tickets for \$8.