

Inland Empire Magazine's High School Basketball Forecast

INLAND EMPIRE

THE REGION'S PREMIER MONTHLY

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EVA LONGORIA

Why She's a Great Role Model for Today's Young Women

95 Great Things To Do This Month

The Holiday ISSUE

Food, Fashion, and Great Gift Ideas for the Holiday Season

PLUS:

CHRISTMAS IN WINE COUNTRY

CUTEST PET WINNERS

10 GREAT SPARKLING WINES





360°

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| HOLIDAY |

Mission Belle

Kelly Roberts lights up the Festival of Lights.

In January, while everyone else is regrouping from the holidays, Kelly Roberts starts all over. The chief operating officer of the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa and wife of Duane Roberts, who acquired the historic hotel in 1992, says the annual Festival of Lights "is a passion of mine." She starts planning the event in January while it's fresh on her mind. The 17th annual festival kicks off Friday, Nov. 27 at 6:15 p.m. at Riverside's Historic Mission Inn when Duane Roberts and Kelly's daughter, Casey Reinhardt, flip the switch together to light up the hotel, launching the season's events in downtown Riverside. "That's a tradition that's very precious to me," Kelly says. This year, revelers can keep warm with treats from Casey's Cupcakes and Capucinos, a new cafe at the Inn. A portion of each cupcake ▶▶

THE MISSION INN'S

Kelly Roberts says the annual Festival of Lights is a passion of hers.

REGIONAL PLAYERS AND PLACES > COVERING THE INLAND EMPIRE FROM ALL THE ANGLES

Mission Belle

sale will support the C.A.S.E.Y. Foundation, a nonprofit organization that stands for Children's Alliance for the Success and Education of Youth founded in 2002 by Casey.

Preparing the 106-year-old property for its greatest season is no small task.

"Each year, we purchase new lights and animated figures to keep the ambiance brilliant and lively," Kelly says. Workers start in early fall to put up the three million-plus lights and make sure the decorative elves and carolers are in good repair. Recent years have included music by the Riverside Community College **Tigers Marching Band** and fireworks. The festival has been featured on "Good Morning America" and in *USA Today*.

The Festival of Lights runs from November 27 to January 3. The Mission Inn is located at 3649 Mission Inn Ave., Riverside. An ice skating rink, located on the Main Street Pedestrian Mall between University and **Mission Inn** avenues, will be open from November 27 to December 18 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, from 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Friday, noon to 11 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 10 p.m. on Sunday. Starting December 19 the ice rink hours will be noon to 11 p.m. daily. Cost is \$13 per hour which includes skate rental.

In addition, Santa will be in downtown Riverside every night from Nov. 27 to Dec. 24 and he's available for breakfast, too.

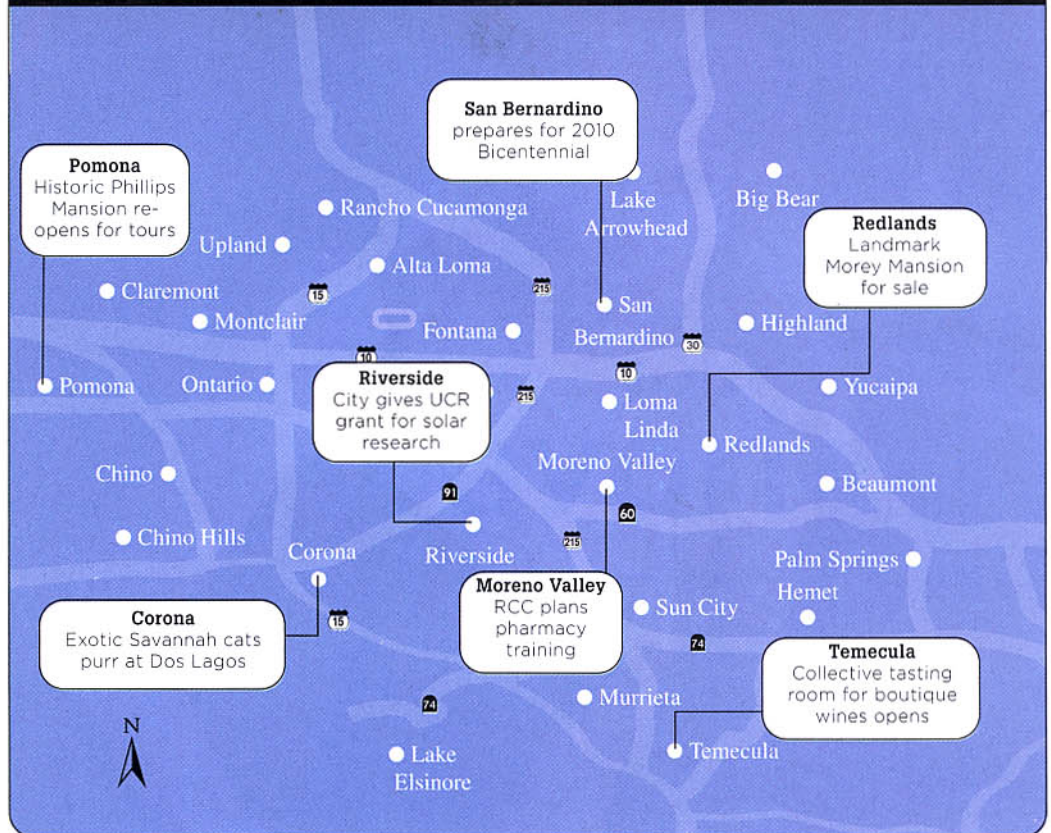
With shopping, dining, and the ambiance of an old-fashioned holiday in the air, **Kelly says** her favorite tradition is a simple one: the Christmas tree that stands in the lobby of the hotel.

"It makes our guests feel at home. The decorations on the tree change from year to year, but everyone always remembers walking into The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa lobby and seeing the gorgeous tree," she says.

For details about the Festival of Lights, phone (951) 826-5586 or see www.festivaloflightsca.com.

BY: TAMMY MINN

TALES OF THE CITIES



| WHO'S WHO |

The Q List:

I have heard rumors that Al Capone lived in Fontana on Tamarind Avenue. Is it true?

Hector Carrera

Though the large, Spanish-style home on Tamarind Avenue was never owned by **Al Capone**, longtime Fontana residents claim he lived there off and on throughout his years as a Chicago mob boss. Once surrounded by vineyards and groves, it would have been one of many houses across the country Capone inhabited during Prohibition. Like the others, the **Tamarind Avenue** house doesn't look like anything special from the outside, but has its fair share of peculiarities and mysteries inside.



For example, some of the closets have secret windows and can be accessed from other closets via passageways in the house's abnormally thick and hollow walls. Every room on the ground floor has access to the yard, and the second chimney projecting from the center of the house has no fireplace underneath it, only a hol-

low wall. A painting of an unidentified woman has also generated curiosity. The proximity to the railroad tracks supports the local myth that Capone used the house as an out-of-the-way hideout on trips to **Los Angeles**, perhaps as a stop-off from the exclusive **Desert Hot Springs** party resort that Capone established with his girlfriend, silent movie star Gladys Walton. The resort was frequented by Hollywood's elite, according to Walton's son, John. He has given tours at Two Bunch Palms (now a 45-room spa resort), sharing stories about his mother and Capone. As for the Fontana house, it has now passed on to other private owners, and renovations have removed some of the **secret passageways**, but the large C adorning the working chimney still garners attention and questions.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT THE IE YOU NEED ANSWERED? Email it to us at Q-list@iemag.bz