



Pueblo Colorado Cinco de Mayo Planning Committee by La Cucaracha Newspaper

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## **The Birthplace of Cinco de Mayo Celebrates its 50th Anniversary Pueblo Colorado commemorates Chicano culture and heritage in the U.S.**

PUEBLO, COLORADO (May 4, 2020) The Pueblo Colorado Cinco de Mayo Planning Committee is reporting that while COVID-19 has put on a damper on most activities, Pueblo Colorado is still the place to be on Cinco de Mayo. This year will mark the city's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the celebration.

*"Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the festivities in Bessemer Park have been put on hold,"* stated Rita J. Martinez, chairwoman of the Cinco de Mayo Planning Committee. *"What didn't get cancelled is the determination of Cinco de Mayo Planning Committee members to mark the holiday in some significant ways. We looked for activities we could do and comply with social distancing directives."*

Those activities will include:

- **A two-hour live-stream tribute to El Cinco on Facebook**  
<https://www.facebook.com/chicanopueblo/> will go live at noon on May 5th. (MDT). The programming will include video and photos from previous Cinco celebrations, and interviews with individuals talking about their involvement with the holiday.
- **The Cinco de Mayo Cruise**  
 In one of the most anticipated and visible activities to the Pueblo community, at least two dozen cars, including a few lowriders, will caravan through Pueblo on the afternoon of May 5th. They will be decorated with numerous signs like, "Cinco de Mayo Pride," and "Viva El Cinco de Mayo." Other signs will thank essential workers and honor families impacted by COVID-19. Some of the destinations of the Cruise are the city's nursing homes, hospitals and other places that employ essential workers.

*"There is tragedy all around us and we want to recognize that,"* Martinez said. *"But we also want to make it known that this our 50th Cinco and we will celebrate."*

El Cinco de Mayo has a long history in Pueblo. It began in 1970 with a parade through downtown and a festival in Mineral Palace Park. That year, Chicano activist Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales of Denver was the keynote speaker. Parade entries came from a broad spectrum of Pueblo Latino organizations including Brown Berets, La Gente, Mexican American Development Association, American G.I. Forum and the Pride City Baton Corps. In the years following, El Cinco was embraced by the Chicano Movement — a civil rights movement.

*“As a Chicano that grew up in Pueblo East Side, the Cinco de Mayo celebration has been for me a place where the community warrior was honored and celebrated. For 50 years our Cinco de Mayo has been a sober event and does not take any kind of sponsorship that diminished our integrity,”* said community activist Reddog.

The event was initially inspired by the history of the May 5 battle at Puebla, Mexico, where a poorly equipped Mexican army under Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza defeated Napoleon III’s elite French army. That victory proved pivotal to the U.S. Civil War as the French were allied with the Confederacy and it prevented the French from rendering military support to the South.

Another associated public event originally scheduled to take place at this time will be rescheduled to later in the year. The Cinco de Mayo Youth Leadership Conference planned for the Colorado State University-Pueblo campus is being rescheduled for September. It is expected to bring 350 high school-age youths to the campus to learn about their mixed Chicano/Indio heritage, politics and the need for Chicano studies in our high schools.

*“Many past participants in the conferences we had 10 and 20 years ago are now college graduates and professional in their fields,”* stated Velia Rincon, PhD. *“We were taught to self-advocate, organize, and create change. Everywhere we were made to feel that we did not belong, we unapologetically carved out our own space.”*



**Aztec dancer by Juan Espinosa**

For additional information, contact Rita J. Martinez, Chairwoman, Cinco de Mayo Planning Committee at [\(719\) 994-4459](tel:7199944459).

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