



SAN ANTONIO  
EXPRESS-NEWS

S.A. TRICENTENNIAL  
1718-2018



TRICENTENNIAL  
CALENDAR

**TODAY**

**Conjunto Fandangos:** VFW Post 9186, 650 White Road, eventbrite.com. An evening of conjunto music and dance. Free. 7:10-30 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY**

**San Antonio International Film Festival:** Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, 100 Auditorium Circle, safilm.com. Narrative, animation, documentary and experimental shorts and features. \$15. Aug. 1-5.

**THURSDAY**

**Corazon Cinema on Main Plaza:** Main Plaza, 115 N. Main Ave., mainplaza.org. Movies on Main Plaza begin at dusk every Thursday through August. Thursday's movie is "The Lion King." Free. 8:30-10:30 p.m.

**UPCOMING**

**Latin Roots Music and Food Festival:** La Villita Maverick Plaza, 418 Villita St., 210-497-5559, aprisa2009.blogspot.com. Features Latin cuisines, live performances, vendors and fun activities. Free. 1-7 p.m. Aug. 4.

**Thirty Poems for the Tricentennial, A Poetic Legacy:** Culture Commons Gallery, 115 Plaza de Armas, sanantonio300.org. An exhibit of poetry and art commemorating the city's anniversary and milestones during and before the founding of our city. Free. 6-9 p.m. Aug. 16.

**INDUSTRY**

# FRITOS ORIGINATED IN SAN ANTONIO

Brackenridge grad turned snack business into empire

FROM EXPRESS-NEWS ARCHIVES

The tiny ad was buried near the bottom of Page 5 of the San Antonio Express classifieds on July 10, 1932:

"CORN chips business for sale, a new food product, making good money."

Very good money, it turned out. That business would become the Fritos corn chip brand during the Great Depression, laying the foundation for a \$14 billion snacking empire in the 21st century.

Frito-Lay North America Inc., a unit of PepsiCo, now is headquartered in Plano and sells snack foods around the world. But Fritos' origins lie in San Antonio. It was here that a soccer coach named Gustavo Olguin from Oaxaca, Mexico, made chips from corn masa using a converted potato ricer.

"A lot of people don't even know of its Mexican origins," said Gustavo Arellano, author of "Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America."

"They figure it's just junk food for frat boys. Little do they know, it's about as Mexican as they come. I mean, come on, corn and Oaxaca and San Antonio? You can't get more Mexican a combo



Staff file photo

**A Frito pie at B&D Ice House: chili, Fritos, cheese, jalapenos and sour cream and chives. Daisy Dean Doolin created "Frito pie" as a way to market the chips, according to Frito-Lay's corporate history.**



**The Frito Co. was started in San Antonio by C.E. Doolin in 1932.**

plate than that."

While Olguin gets credit for the birth of the corn chips, it's entrepreneur Charles Elmer "C.E." Doolin who transformed them into a lucrative national business and a staple of vending machines and gas stations.

Doolin, a Brackenridge High School graduate, operated Highland Park Confectionery between 1929 and 1932, according to a 1957 letter from Doolin



PepsiCo

**Fritos have their origins in San Antonio.**

lin printed in the book "Fritos Pie: Stories, Recipes, and More," written by his daughter, Kaleta Doolin.

The business was

suffering because of a price war between ice cream suppliers, combined with the economic conditions during the Depression. Doolin

hoped to save it by diversifying into other snack foods. He inquired about selling tortilla chips, but they grew stale too easily.

Doolin discovered corn chips — served at a Mexican restaurant, at an ice house or at a gas station, depending on who's telling the story. Olguin, wanting to return to Mexico, had placed the newspaper ad to sell his corn-chip business.

Doolin paid \$100 for the recipe along with Olguin's hand-operated potato ricer and his retail accounts. Doolin borrowed most of the money from his mother, who hocked her wedding ring to get it.

The Doolin family — C.E., his parents and his brother — began frying the corn chips at their home. In September 1932, C.E. Doolin chartered the Frito Co. "Frito" is a Spanish word meaning "fried." The chips were delivered in a Model T.

The family matriarch, Daisy Dean Doolin, came up with the idea of combining the chips with chili and cheese to create a "Frito pie," according to Frito-Lay's corporate history. It was one of several dishes she created to market the chips.

The business soon outgrew the family kitchen. By 1958, Frito sales exceeded \$51 million, according to Arellano.

*A longer version of this report by Jessica Belasco ran May 11, 2015. Read it at ExpressNews.com.*