



Join us to kick off the holiday season on Nov 18th: the 17th Annual Tree Lighting in Downtown Alton

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(Alton, IL) – On Friday, November 18th Alton Marketplace will host an event that's sure to get you into the holiday spirit. The 17th Annual Tree Lighting at Lincoln-Douglas Square will begin with the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus on the trolley at 6:00. The free festivities including caroling, candy, cookies and hot cocoa will continue until 6:45 when Alderman Jim Ryan flips the lights on our beautiful tree, which is provided by the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club.

Carols will fill the air throughout the evening provided by many area Girl Scout Troops as well as the Main Street United Methodist Youth Choir. Pastor Ken Tegtmeier from Resurrection Lutheran Church will bless the tree. Other speakers include Rotary Club 2011 President Mike Tillman, and Salvation Army Captain Randy Tooley, who will be kicking off the "Tree of Lights" campaign.

The public is encouraged to help the less fortunate by bringing canned food donations to the event, which will be constructed into a giant "Castle of Cans" to benefit the food pantry at the Salvation Army. You can also drop off non-perishable food donations in advance into collection boxes in the lobbies of Alton City Hall, the Alton Police Department, or either of the Alton Fire Stations any time before 5pm on Thursday, November 17th.

From 5:30-7:30, free trolley transportation will be provided between Lincoln-Douglas Square and the Riverbender.com Community Center, located at 200 W. 3rd Street. The public is invited to the Center after the tree lighting to play games with Santa & Mrs. Claus and warm up with refreshments indoors during their holiday open house until 9:

00. Kids can pet a live reindeer outdoors on 3rd Street; please bring your cameras to capture photos of your family with Santa and the live reindeer at no charge. Boys and girls are encouraged to dress up in creative holiday themed costumes such as elves, Santa, or angels for the event. Kids should come to the stage of the Community Center at 7:45 where judges will give \$25 gift cards to the boy and girl in the best costumes.

The public is encouraged to make a night of it and enjoy the fun activities in the district while patronizing the downtown merchants for their holiday shopping and enjoying new and improved holiday decorations provided by Alton Marketplace and installed by their team of volunteers. We hope to see you on the 18th for a wonderful evening of holiday cheer! For more information please visit www.AltonMarketplace.com.

Alton Marketplace would like to thank Chairpeople Stacey Noble Loveland and Sarah Ansell, as well as the following sponsors who have made this event possible: Dave Mungenast Alton Toyota Scion, Alton Bell Community Credit Union, The Imaging Center of Alton, Liberty Bank, The Firehouse, Scheffel & Company, Scott Credit Union, Roberts Motors, Conoco Phillips, CNB Bank & Trust, Bank of Edwardsville, Shell Community Federal Credit Union, Temple Banquet Center, Argosy Casino, Alton Memorial Hospital, Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club, Riverbender.com, The Telegraph, WBGZ Radio, and Today's AdVantage.