



Riverbender.com Community Center's Annual Holiday Open House set for Friday, Nov. 17

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer
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ALTON - Following Alton Main Street's Community Tree Lighting at Lincoln Douglas Square, the Riverbender.com Community Center will be hosting their Annual Holiday Open House from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m on Friday, Nov. 17, at 200 W. Third Street.





Free trolley rides will be provided to take families from the tree lighting ceremony to the community center for an evening of games, live music, storytelling, free cocoa and a chance to see Santa.

"Santa's the big attraction," Vicki Grover, chairman of the open house said. "It's absolutely free. You get to come in and take advantage of all the things the center has to offer. We're trying to accommodate not just the kids this night but also the adults. This is really a night for everybody, the community center is for everybody."

Friday's event will also include the grand reopening of the Dragonfly Room on the second floor of the community center.

"We're excited to celebrate the grand reopening of the Dragonfly Cafe," volunteer Cathie Wright said. "The timing of the reopening couldn't have come at a better time, with days getting shorter and colder, parents and young children can feel isolated in their homes. It is the perfect location to meet other families with young children and to give your toddlers and preschoolers a place they can run, jump, imagine and create during the cold winter months."

Wright added that after the unveiling Friday night, the Dragonfly Room will be open from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. every Wednesday.

The room, which is furnished for younger children, has been completely renovated with fresh paint, new toys, books, activities. It will also be the location for Friday's live story telling by Dorothy Kraus from Glen Carbon Elementary School.

Thanks to a very generous donation from Hit-N-Run owners Dwight and Teresa Fowler, children in attendance will have the opportunity to go home with some toys.

John Hentrich, owner of the community center, said a lot of credit goes to Vicki Grover for her work on the open house and to Tracy Bogard for her help with the Dragonfly Room. He also said that Alton Main Street is the driving force behind Friday's event.

"We really appreciate the fact that Alton Main Street has partnered with us on this event every year," Hentrich said. "They are the drivers of the event."