

Join Alton Main Street To Kick Off The Holiday Season At The 28th Annual Tree Lighting

by Sara McGibany

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ALTON - On Friday, November 18th Alton Main Street will host an event that's sure to get you into the holiday spirit. The 28th Annual Community Tree Lighting at Lincoln-Douglas Square will begin with the arrival of Santa Claus on the trolley at 6:00. The free festivities including caroling, cookies, and hot cocoa will continue until 6:45 when

Mayor David Goins flips the lights on the beautiful tree, which is provided by the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club. Families are encouraged to bring their cameras to take pictures with Santa and costumed holiday characters.

Songs will fill the air throughout the evening provided by area Girl Scout Troops and the Great Rivers Choral Society. Brother Joshua Adams will bless the tree, and other speakers include Rotary Club President Antione Williams, and Salvation Army Captain Cassy Grey, who will be kicking off the “Tree of Lights” campaign with 2022 Chairpeople Dr. John and Barb Hoelscher.

Families are welcome to create holiday crafts during the event with the Madison County Child Advocacy Center. Visitors can check out the Salvation Army’s Big Red Kettle, and the public is encouraged to help the less fortunate by bringing non-perishable food donations to benefit the food pantry at the Salvation Army. The items will be constructed into a giant “Castle of Cans” at the foot of the Lincoln and Douglas statues during the event. Attendees can also bring along gently used coats, hats, gloves and blankets to support the IMG Gives Back winter-wear drive to benefit the Community Hope Center. New this year, the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program will be conducting a holiday light exchange at the event. Bring a burned out string of holiday lights and pass them off to be recycled and trade for a new LED string.

Between the hours of 5:30-7:30, free trolley transportation will be provided between Lincoln-Douglas Square and the corner of 3rd and Belle Streets. Free horse and carriage rides will be offered from 7:00-9:00 p.m., departing from the corner of 3rd and Belle. Families can enter a drawing to ride in the carriage with Santa by posting their favorite photo from a prior Tree Lighting; details on how to enter can be found at www.facebook.com/AltonMainStreet.

The public is encouraged to make a night of it and enjoy the fun activities in the district while patronizing the downtown merchants and restaurants for their holiday shopping and dining. You can find more information on the many ways that Alton Main Street is working to promote and advance the historic district, as well as ways to get involved at www.DowntownAlton.com.

Alton Main Street would like to thank the following sponsors who have made this event possible: the City of Alton, Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau, Chiro One Wellness Centers, Renewal by Andersen, Simmons Hanly Conroy, Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery, Alton Memorial Hospital, Imperial Manufacturing, Altonized Community Federal Credit Union, Sam's Pawn Shop, Picture This & More, Sheppard, Morgan & Schwaab, Marquette Catholic High School, The Salvation Army, Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club, OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center, Riverbender.com, The Telegraph, WBGZ Radio, and the AdVantage.

