

Alton Main Street Kicks Off Holiday Season With Tree Lighting On Nov. 17

by Sara McGibany

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ALTON - On Friday, November 17, 2023, Alton Main Street will host an event that's sure to get you into the holiday spirit. The 29th Annual community Tree Lighting at Lincoln-Douglas Square will begin with the arrival of Santa Claus on the trolley at 6 p. m. The free festivities including caroling, cookies and hot cocoa will continue until 6:45 p.m. when Mayor David Goins flips the lights on the beautiful tree, which is provided by the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club.

This event will be broadcast live in a cooperative effort between Riverbender.com and WBGZ Radio. Mike Roberts and C.J. Nasello of Our Daily Show! will host the broadcast.

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, the Salvation Army's "Let the Music Begin" singing group and the Great Rivers Choral Society. Pastor Patrick Thatcher of Country Bible Church will bless the tree, and other speakers include Alton Main Street President Stephanie Schrage, Rotary Club President Jim Claywell, and Salvation Army Captain Cassy Grey, who will be kicking off the "Tree of Lights" campaign with 2022 Chairpeople Mike and Karen Roberts.

Visitors can check out the Salvation Army's Big Red Kettle as well as a bounce house, 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.