

November 13, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

Mayor's tree lighting kicks off Festival of Lights



Springfield's annual Festival of Lights, presented this year by Mercy, will kick off at 5:30 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 23 at Jordan Valley Park. Mayor Bob Stephens will signal the start of the holiday season by lighting a 33-foot Norway spruce, located in the park, east of the Mediacom Ice Park. The musical tree and surrounding park will be lit up with thousands of lights.

Hundreds of school-aged children are expected to attend the tree lighting ceremony, which includes live music by the Children's Choirs of Southwest Missouri and of course, a visit by Santa and Mrs. Claus.

The Mayor will have special help from Springfield public and private schools' first- and second-graders, who will parade with Santa through Jordan Valley Park to Hammons Field. Prizes are available for first- and second-grade classrooms with the highest attendance.

Mediacom Ice Park, located at 635 E. Trafficway, will again offer free ice skating, 6-8 p.m. Skate rental is \$2.50.

Springfield Cardinals will host a Cardinals Christmas following the tree-lighting ceremony. Children will be able to visit with Santa and enjoy hot chocolate and candy canes. The Cardinals event will end with a big bang: a fireworks show set to holiday music.

Santa's mailbox (a decked-out mailbox provided by the U.S. Postal Service) returns, on-site Saturday night only, for children to send letters to Santa.

New this year is "Illumination Celebration" at The Tower Club. The exclusive club is open to the public for a specially created "cruise ship-style" holiday buffet created by chef Brad Lyons. Dine

high in the sky and view the Mayor's Tree Lighting Ceremony and fireworks from a special viewing area inside the restaurant. Cost is \$35/person. Doors open at 5 p.m. Call 417-866-4466 for reservations. Reservations are filling up quickly.

Also new this year is a tree-lighting ceremony and window display reveal at Park Central Square at 8 p.m. Join hosts "The Four Jeffs" (Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Seifried; Mystery Hour's Jeff Houghton; Skinny Improv's Jeff Jenkins and Mother's Brewery's Jeff Schrag) and dance to the tunes of "Move and Groove," a three-piece jazz/funk band that should have everyone rockin' around the Christmas tree. A free shuttle to and from the Tower Club will run 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Festival of Lights is a six-week celebration containing a flurry of holiday activities in Springfield's Center City from Nov. 23 through New Year's Day. Major events, in addition to the Mayor's Tree Lighting Ceremony, include:

- [Candyland at the Footbridge](#), at the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge on Commercial Street, noon, Dec. 7.
- [Downtown Springfield Christmas Parade](#), 2 p.m., Dec. 14.
- First Night Springfield 2013, 8 p.m. – midnight, New Year's Eve.

Free parking is available at Mediacom Ice Park and Hammons Field. Convenient parking is also available for a fee at the Jordan Valley Car Park on Trafficway.

The City of Springfield appreciates the support of presenting sponsor Mercy and event sponsors Midwest Family Radio and the Springfield Cardinals.

For more information, contact Cora Scott at 417-380-3352 or cscott@springfieldmo.gov.

Resources

- [Printable Festival of Lights Calendar](#) (pdf)
- [Complete listing of Festival of Lights Events](#)