

DBA HOSTS FUN FAMILY EVENTS

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BDN file photo The Downtown Beloit association's annual Grand Holiday Lighted Parade is taking place in downtown Beloit on Nov. 24. Music will start at 5 p.m. and Santa Claus will land atop First National Bank at 6 p.m. The parade will then travel along Grand Avenue to Horace White Park.

BELOIT - The outdoor farmers market has closed for the season, but cold weather can't stop downtown Beloit from buzzing with activity.

The Downtown Beloit Association (DBA) is again hosting two beloved events, the Grand Holiday Lighted Parade and Holidazzle, to get locals in the spirit.

"We're celebrating our 25th year of the Grand Holiday Lighted Parade," said Crystal Cribbs, DBA promotions coordinator. "Holidazzle is in its 14th year."

All of the fun will kick off with the Grand Holiday Lighted Parade on Nov. 24. Music will start at 5 p.m. near the intersection of State Street and Grand Avenue.

Free hot chocolate will be served courtesy of the Salvation Army at First National Bank Plaza.

At 6 p.m. Santa Claus will be landing his sleigh atop the First National Bank building and the Beloit Fire Department staff will help him get down safely.

"Santa will then help light the tree and then the parade will kick off," Cribbs said. "The route will be along Grand Avenue going to Horace White Park."

Approximately two dozen lighted floats from local businesses and nonprofit agencies are expected to participate this year.

"There's always a good mix of entries and for a lot of people the parade is a tradition," Cribbs said. "It's always wonderful and the crowds continue to grow."

Mr. and Mrs. Claus will be at Turtle Creek Bookstore, 444 E. Grand Ave., from 7-8 p.m. for kids to meet. Photos will be available for a nominal charge.

For those who aren't quite sure what gifts to get their friends and loved ones this year, Holidazzle is sure to help.

The event will take place from 5-9 p.m. Dec. 1 at approximately 30 businesses throughout downtown.

Craftspeople and vendors will be setting up shop at the participating businesses, and visitors can hop aboard a free trolley to go from place to place.

"The trolley will be running from 5-9:30 p.m. and holiday music will be playing on board," Cribbs said.

Vision Beloit will be hosting its annual party at the Hendricks Center for the Performing Arts during the event.

Cribbs said the goal of the event is to not only provide a fun activity, but also remind to support local businesses.

"Holidazzle is such a unique event and is so different from just going to the mall," she said. "You'll bump into so many people."