

Parading into the holiday season

By JENNIFER TRANMER Staff writer | Posted: Wednesday, November 25, 2015 10:00 am

BELOIT — The days may be getting shorter, but the nights will be brighter.

The Downtown Beloit Association is once again hosting the annual tree lighting, Grand Lighted Holiday Parade and Holidazzle to brighten those wintry nights and kick off the holiday season.

“There are a lot of children in the community, and it’s good to be able to offer our youth something to look back on and be part of during the holidays,” said Crystal Buhmeyer, program coordinator for the Downtown Beloit Association.

So bundle up for a fun launch to the holiday season: The annual parade and tree lighting is set for Friday, Nov. 27, with live music kicking off the night at 5 p.m. Holidazzle is set for Friday, Dec. 4, with all of the fun beginning at 5 p.m.

In addition to the tree lighting, announced from the top of First National Bank and Trust, there also will be live music, free hot chocolate, the lighted parade and visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus at Turtle Creek Bookstore. The parade is set to kick off at 6:15 p.m. and run along Grand Avenue in downtown Beloit. There will be about 30 participants, including, floats, marching bands, the Beloit Fire honor guard, and Santa will once again be driven through town by the Harlem-Roscoe Fire Department.

“It’s great because we get other communities involved,” Buhmeyer said.

To further give back to the community, the DBA is asking for canned food donations from all parade participants to donate to Caritas.

“(It’s) to help them out during the holiday season,” Buhmeyer said.

New this year, Holidazzle will come just one week after the tree lighting and lighted parade.

“We encourage people to shop small in downtown for the holidays to support local businesses,” Buhmeyer said.

In addition to the specially decorated storefronts and late business hours, there also will be artists and



Cookie time

Stateline Area families enjoy the chance to decorate cookies at Bagel's and More in downtown Beloit as part of the Downtown Beloit Association's Holidazzle.

crafters specializing in various crafts to offer area residents unique gift giving ideas. They will be on hand in more than 40 storefronts and restaurants in downtown, enhancing attendees' perusing experience.

As in past years, there will be free trolley rides through downtown, Santa will be available for visits, plenty of holiday sweets and live music.

Buhmeyer said these holiday traditions are important to Beloit and she loves coming to see all the smiling faces, and families coming together to kick off the holidays.

"A lot of people plan their holidays (around these events)," Buhmeyer said. "It's becoming an annual tradition. It's a memory that we're creating for our youth that they can look back on."

For more information, visit the DBA's website at www.downtownbeloit.com.

Schedule of events

Lighted parade

Nov. 27

5 p.m. Live music begins at First National Bank Plaza

6 p.m. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive and tree lighting begins at the plaza

6:15 p.m. Lighted parade begins along Grand Avenue (Third St. to Horace White Park)

7 p.m. Santa and Mrs. Claus available for photos at the Turtle Creek Bookstore, 444 E. Grand Ave.

Holidazzle

Dec. 4

5 to 9 p.m. Artists, Santa visits, cookie decorating and other holiday activities