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## Holiday season set to light up Princeton and Milaca after Thanksgiving

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Nov 16, 2023



As the turkey settles in the bellies of those celebrating Thanksgiving on Thursday, Nov. 23, Milaca will kick off celebrations.



On Friday, Nov. 24, Milaca is hosting its annual tree lighting ceremony and event from 5-7 p.m. at Alfred Olson Park across the street from the First National Bank of Milaca.

Attendees can look forward to witnessing the lighting of the Christmas tree in the park around 5:15 p.m. and enjoy sleigh rides, s'mores, campfires, live music, photos with Santa, and a hotdish competition.

Santa will be paying a visit to the First National Bank of Milaca for photos from 4-5 p.m. and will be attending the tree lighting immediately following his visit to the bank.

Santa and Mrs. Claus will be collecting canned and dry goods food items at the tree lighting event to be donated to the Milaca Food Pantry.

Those who register for the hotdish competition during the tree lighting will have a chance to win the 50/50 prize, which is based on the total of registration fees. The cost to enter the competition is \$10 for members of the Milaca Area Chamber of Commerce and \$20 for nonmembers. Sample cups and spoons will be provided. However, registrants are asked to provide their own tables and serving utensils.

Those who attend the tree lighting event are also invited to visit nearby shops for Small Business Saturday to check out their specials the night of the event as well as on Saturday, Nov. 25.

Also during the tree lighting event is the Milaca Arts Center (MAC) annual holiday celebration MAC the Halls. Local vendors will have their goods available for sale to help kick-start holiday shopping.

Then on Saturday, Nov. 25, the Milaca community is invited to attend the Santa Experience at the historic Old Town Hall at 16333 117th Ave. in Milaca.

The event will feature Santa, Mrs. Claus and the elves with live music by Paul Blondell, Richard Curot, Diane Bilmack, and Mrs. Claus herself in the historic building that once was Milaca Township hall. The event will run from noon to 4 p.m.

To learn more about holiday kick-off events in Milaca, visit <https://www.milacachamber.com/#!directory/ord=rnd>.

Over in Princeton on Nov. 25, Small Business Saturday will feature a variety of deals and specials in participating small businesses.

Businesses also have the opportunity to participate in the decorating contest to the theme of "A Winter Wonderland." Shoppers can vote for their favorite decorations on the Princeton Area Chamber of Commerce Facebook page on the day of the event.

From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Santaville will take over the Amdall Room in the Princeton Depot. Attendees can take photos with Santa, try their hands at some crafts, and more. This event is hosted by the Civic Betterment Club, Princeton Ambassadors, and the city of Princeton.

At 5:30 p.m. is the annual Mini Dazzle Parade. The parade will start on First Street and head towards Rum River Drive. It will then end on Fourth Avenue near the Princeton Area Library.

Following the Mini Dazzle Parade at approximately 6:15 p.m. is the lighting of Light Up Princeton in Riverside park.

View the lights at the viewing station on Fourth Avenue and watch as Santa flips the switch to Light Up Princeton. The lineup for Light Up Princeton will be on the shoulder of Rum River Drive. Light Up Princeton is a drive-through event only.

While the event is free, freewill donations will be accepted. Donations of nonperishable food items for the Princeton Pantry will also be collected.

Any volunteer group working Light Up Princeton will name a nonprofit organization to receive half of the donations made each night the display is open. The other half of the donations will go to the Princeton Pantry and Light Up Princeton for the following year.

After its opening night, Light Up Princeton will be open every night through Dec. 24 from 6-9 p.m.

To learn more about holiday kickoff events in Princeton, visit <https://www.princetonmnchamber.org/>.

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