

Dayton Holiday Festival Returns to Courthouse Square, Kicks Off with Grande Illumination & Dayton Children's Parade on Thanksgiving Weekend

Photos from past Grande Illumination and Parade events are available for download on the [DDP's Flickr page](#).

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DAYTON, Ohio, Nov. 14, 2016 — Downtown Dayton will celebrate 44 years of the holiday season during the month-long [Dayton Holiday Festival](#), presented by DP&L, which kicks off with the Grande Illumination and Dayton Children's Parade Spectacular in Lights **from 4 to 9 p.m. Friday, Nov. 25**. Courthouse Square will be the center of the evening full of family entertainment.



A new attraction this year is a photo station featuring live reindeer! The exhibit includes a sleigh and reindeer that create the perfect backdrop for holiday cards or photos. The new feature is a gift to the community from presenting sponsor DP&L.

Activities planned for the day include the **Grande Illumination** tree-lighting ceremony. The tree arrives at Courthouse Square on Friday, Nov. 11. Use the magic glasses, sponsored by CareSource, to reveal the special pattern. Other activities for the day of family fun include live musical entertainment, carnival rides and games, holiday crafts, horse-drawn wagon rides, and a gingerbread house display. The suggested cost for wagon rides is \$1 per person, but all other activities are free.

A tree-lighting ceremony will take place at **7:45 p.m. on Courthouse Square**, followed immediately by the **Dayton Children's Parade Spectacular in Lights**. Thousands of lights will illuminate the 45-minute parade, featuring a variety of festive floats, entertainers, animals and several surprises.

"The Grande Illumination and Dayton Children's Parade Spectacular in Lights is a great night for the entire family to come downtown," said Sandra Gudorf, president of the Downtown Dayton Partnership. "It is a magical night guaranteed to put you in the holiday spirit."

The Dayton Holiday Festival continues throughout the month of December with such activities as the Family Movie Series at The Neon, the Tike's Shoppe, Virginia Kettering's Holiday Train Display, animated window displays and entertainment in the Schuster Center Wintergarden, and more.

The Dayton Holiday Festival is presented by the [Downtown Dayton Partnership](#), the [City of Dayton](#), [Montgomery County](#) and the Mrs. Virginia W. Kettering Dayton Holiday Festival Fund. A complete list of festival events is [available online](#), as well as a [calendar of other downtown holiday events](#).

Volunteers are still needed! [Sign up online](#) to volunteer.

The DDP's website has a complete list of downtown's events, a dining guide, parking map and more at www.downtowndayton.org. [Follow the DDP on Facebook](#) to keep up with downtown events and news.

Grande Illumination & Dayton Children's Parade Spectacular in Lights Activities

- **Grande Illumination, presented by DP&L** — The tree-lighting ceremony will take place at 7:45 p.m. on Courthouse Square. *Media sponsor: BIG 106.5 FM*
- **Dayton Children's Parade Spectacular in Lights** — More than 100,000 lights will illuminate the floats and other units in the parade, which starts immediately following the Grande Illumination. The route: West Second Street to Main Street, south on Main Street to Fourth Street, and then west on Fourth Street.

- **NEW! Live reindeer photo station, sponsored by DP&L** — Take a family photo with a sleigh and live reindeer. It's unique and fun way to capture your memories of the Grande Illumination and Parade!
- **Main Stage Entertainment** — Enjoy live entertainment on the Courthouse Square stage. Performances begin around 4 p.m. The schedule is:
 - 4:00-4:20 p.m. — Dancing Divas
 - 4:40-5:00 p.m. — Miami Valley Music Men
 - 5:10-5:30 p.m. — Berachah Valley
 - 5:40-6:05 p.m. — Young Professionals Choral Collective
 - 6:20-6:55 p.m. — Alexis Gomez Trio
 - 7:10-7:45 p.m. — Dayton Celebration Chorus
- **Gingerbread Homes for the Holidays Contest, sponsored by the Downtown Dayton Priority Board and B94.5 Hot Country** — Contest entries will be on display in the Old Courthouse. The top amateur and professional houses each will receive \$500! Winners will be announced on the Main Stage before the Grande Illumination.
- **The Holiday Village, sponsored by Spectrum Reach; games and crafts sponsored by Hollywood Gaming – Dayton Raceway** — Located in the lobby of the Kettering Tower from 4-9 p.m., this is a favorite stop for children, featuring free crafts and games for kids and Mrs. Virginia Kettering's train on display. At the "Dial-An-Elf" station, kids can speak to one of Santa's helpers and share their wish list. Kids also can make holiday arts and crafts and play games. The Holiday Village Stage schedule includes live performances.
- **Street Fair on Third, sponsored by Fifth Third Bank** — At this holiday street fair, free rides will be set up on Third Street between Main and Ludlow streets.
- **Horse-Drawn Wagon Rides** — From 4 to 7:30 p.m., wagons will pick up passengers at the corner of Second and Main streets for a ride through downtown. Rides are \$1 per person. Lines can be long, so come early.
- **The Tike's Shoppe, sponsored by DP&L and managed by YES! For Youth with support from: ABC 22/FOX 45 and the Victoria Theatre Association** — For decades, children in Dayton have been able to shop for their loved ones in a store that's just their size. The shop will be located in the Schuster Center Wintergarden near the entrance at Ludlow and Second streets, and will officially open the day of the Grande Illumination from 3 to 9 p.m. Guests also can relive the magic of Rike's animated holiday windows, on display in the Wintergarden. The Tike's Shoppe will be open on selected dates through Dec. 23. For specific times, call (937) 212-1983.
- **Junior League of Dayton's Holiday Adventure, sponsored by McAfee Heating and Air Conditioning** — Kids will go on an adventure around the festival footprint. Children who visit all of the stops will receive a free book.
- **Magic Glasses, sponsored by CareSource** — Look for volunteers passing out these special glasses on Courthouse Square prior to the tree lighting.

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