

Experience A Country Christmas

A night to remember

Festival of Lights offers an evening of entertainment

LISA CARTWRIGHT
Features

Forget what you remember from last year's Festival of Lights, this year, the Stouffville festival is completely new.

Organizer Ruth LeBlanc has made the November 28 festival a night that will not be forgotten.

"Finally Stouffville is having a true festival. A festival of Christmas, of good will," said LeBlanc who has been organizing the event since June.

The festival, sponsored by the Stouffville Tribune, begins at 4 pm with a team of horses drawing a beautiful trolley up and down Main Street. The trolley will continue to run until 7 pm.

Starting at 6:30 pm and continuing for a half an hour, people can listen to Glovin and Diapazon perform Christmas music in the gazebo, located right across from the Library.

The Salvation Army Band will also be playing on the street.

People can also visit the live nativity scene located in the Clock Tower. There will be a live Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus as well as a llama, a sheep and a shepherd.

At 7 pm, the ceremonies begin at the Civic Square (near the Clock Tower.)

LeBlanc, who is the master of ceremonies, said she expects the festival to continue for over an hour. But, she said, people won't have time to worry about their cold feet.

"It's going to be so fast-paced that they won't realize" the time, she said.

The ceremonies begin with Whitchurch-Stouffville's town crier - Marcel Bossi - proclaiming the arrival of the Christmas season in Stouffville.

After mayor Wayne Emmerson lights the Christmas tree, The Highlanders - a group of 30 children from Whitchurch-Highland Public School will sing Christmas songs.

But, the entertainment doesn't end there.

The Tribettes - the women from the Tribune - will be doing their version of Rocking Around the Christmas Tree, while the Clerk's Quintet - administrators and clerks from the Town Hall - will also be singing Christmas carols. Eight businessmen from Stouffville will be performing a skit and singing songs.

Just so you aren't just watching the show, people from the Stouffville Missionary Church will encourage you to sing two Christmas carols with them.

During the festival there will be a chance to enter and win free prizes, sample free hot chocolate, provided and served by staff from Stouffville Chrysler, hot apple cider, chocolates and candy canes given out by Santa himself.

For people who don't want to stand for the evening, there will also be some seating available.

Duncan Giles, from Giles Chev Olds is providing a free shuttle service for seniors. Seniors who want to be picked up and taken to the event can call 640-1610.

"(The festival) is a way to meet your neighbours. It's community goodwill. It's an evening of fun."

While LeBlanc said she expects the organized part of the festival to be over by 8:30 pm, she said people are encouraged to walk along Main Street and see all the stores that are decorated for Christmas. Some of the stores are also offering in-store specials that night.

Ride the trolley ...

The horse and trolley, that will be available for free rides the night of the festival, will be travelling along Main Street Stouffville during the weekends until Christmas.

For \$1, people can purchase a pass that will get them on the trolley as often as they want for a day.



G. OTTO

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