

Holiday events happening in Greene

By Shon Meade, Kara Bemer and Steve Barrett | Posted: Friday, November 28, 2014 2:00 am

Holiday events will be abundant in Greene County as the holiday season approaches.

Greene County and other local residents will have the opportunity to pay Santa Claus a visit on Dec. 6, when the Greene County Fairgrounds will host the annual "Breakfast with Santa."

The Greene County commissioners and the county's Department of Recreation are sponsoring the event.

Admission is \$8 and the event will be held in the lower level of the 4-H building at the fairgrounds.

From 9 to 11 a.m., children and parents will be able to enjoy a meal with Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Chef Dan Wagner, a culinary arts teacher at the Greene County Career and Technology Center, will be catering the breakfast.

The event will not only include breakfast, but various other activities that will put everyone in the holiday spirit.

Children will be able to participate in a Christmas coloring contest. The best picture in each age range will win a prize. There will also be Christmas arts and crafts for the kids to enjoy, and pictures with Santa will be available.

Community member Becky Wilson said she took her grandson to this event a few



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Santa Claus will be very busy in Greene County during the first weekend of December, when he will participate in a "Breakfast with Santa" at the county fairgrounds and the annual Waynesburg Christmas Parade. The breakfast and parade are just a couple of the many holiday events scheduled to be held throughout the county this Christmas season. (Photo by Steve Barrett)

years ago.

“I got a good picture of him crying,” Wilson said. “It’s something we will have forever and tease him with.”

Reindeer food and a Santa hat will be given to the kids to take home, and those who visit Santa will also receive a special gift from him.

“What child doesn’t like Santa?” said community member Dawn Bowlen Melzer. “It’s fun for the kids. They eat, sit on Santa’s lap and do activities.”

If interested in reserving tickets for Breakfast with Santa, or for further information, contact the Greene County Department of Recreation by calling 724-852-5323.

Also, now through Friday, Dec. 12, local children are invited to send letters to Santa in care of the Department of Recreation, according to a press release issued by the Department of Recreation.

Any child wishing to receive a personalized letter from Santa can simply send a letter with a completed letter request form to Greene County Department of Recreation, ATTN: Santa Claus, 107 Fairgrounds Road, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Letter request forms must include the child’s contact and basic information, including any gifts requested from Santa, and must be completed by a parent or guardian. Forms will be available from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 5, at the Holiday Open House in downtown Waynesburg. They are also available online at www.co.greene.pa.us, or by calling 724-852-5323.

A completed form must accompany each letter, and please limit one request per child. There is no cost for a letter from Santa as funding has been provided through various sponsors and fundraising efforts the Department of Recreation holds throughout the year. Children should receive the letters before Christmas.

Speaking of the Holiday Open House, lit fire barrels outside, live holiday music and horse-drawn wagon rides are just a glimpse of the Christmas cheer that will be shared at the event held in downtown Waynesburg on Dec. 5.

From 5 to 8:30 p.m. the community is invited to attend the Holiday Open House, an annual event presented by Waynesburg Prosperous & Beautiful.

CONSOL Energy, CanStruction, Greene County Tourism Promotion Agency and some downtown merchants are sponsors of this year’s open house.

The streets will be closed to through traffic; merchants and food vendors will be staying out late for activities and a special fundraiser will also take place.

CanStruction is a project that encourages local artists to craft sculptures out of nonperishable food items, food boxes and cans. When the sculptures are completed, they are put on display during the open house and are also voted on by the public. Many individuals and groups are participating in CanStruction.

CONSOL Energy will cover the cost of the nonperishable items that were used to create the art. After the open house is over, all canned goods collected will be donated to the Corner Cupboard Food Bank.

The Holiday Open House has become a tradition not only because of the fun activities, but also due to the high impact it holds as a charity event.

“The Holiday Open House is a signature event for Waynesburg,” said Tommy Johnson, vice president, public and government relations of CONSOL Energy. “It’s a great way for people to enjoy the holiday season with friends and family while supporting local businesses that give back to the community. The event is really remarkable and has grown beyond what we could have imagined. There are activities for everyone – from Christmas shopping for adults to horse-drawn carriage rides and crafts for children.”

Some highlights of the Holiday Open House are pictures with Santa Claus, Flix on Brix – which will be displaying “A Christmas Story” outside – free caricatures, free children’s crafts and gift-wrapping, among many other activities that are made available for the public.

Many of the local participating businesses are also offering special holiday discounts.

A souvenir Holiday Open House map, hand drawn by Leslie Fehling, is available to help find the location of activities, can sculptures, food and shopping. The maps are provided through the Greene County Tourism Promotion Agency.

Brad Wilson is one of the committee members planning the Open House and is responsible for contacting musicians to play along High Street.

“I usually concentrate on having student groups and ensembles from the university come play so that they can get some experience playing for events and exposure in the community,” Wilson said. “And of course there’s going to be some great music being played out on the streets. This event is unique because of the way it brings

the community out and gets so many people involved.”

Wilson became a committee member after a previous internship he had while completing his arts administration degree at Waynesburg University.

Wilson was able to participate in committee meetings and found that it had given him an opportunity to coordinate with the community and university. This event is favorable to Wilson, as he has the opportunity to bring the holiday spirit to the event by planning the entertainment.

“This year should be a pretty good one. We have a lot to offer while High Street is closed. From vendors selling hot drinks and food, to Flix on Brix showing a classic holiday movie, there is something for everyone,” Wilson said. “Be sure to visit as many businesses as possible. The ones I would specifically recommend are two of the newest shops on the street, 5 Kidz Kandy and Ruff Creek Crafts. They’re a great couple of additions to the local community, and I know (the public is) always looking for a good place for some local drinks and sweets.”

For more information about the Holiday Open House, visit www.waynesburgpa.org.

The 2014 Downtown Waynesburg Christmas Parade will take place at 2 p.m. on Dec. 6 as well.

The Waynesburg Area Chamber of Commerce is currently busy planning the parade, and the execution of the parade is underwritten by Greene County Tourism.

According to a press release issued by the Chamber, more than 200 applications were mailed to schools, churches, civic organizations and other interested parties throughout the county to participate in the parade.

Miss Rain Day 2014, Morgan Voithofer and the Chamber’s 2014 Distinguished Service Award winners, Rev. Donald Wilson, Edward and Sandy Zeglan and Patriots Dream Riding Association will have the honor of leading the parade down High Street as its Grand Marshals.

There is no central theme but all entries are asked to portray the true Christmas Spirit. Float judging will take place prior to the start of the parade. Trophies will be awarded to the top three floats. All floats and other entries are reminded that no live Santa is permitted on any unit in the parade as he is the guest of honor at the conclusion of the parade.

Also, once again, WCYJ Television from Waynesburg University will be videotaping the parade for a later broadcast on local stations. WCYJ is a student-operated television station under the direction of Bill Molzon.

Anyone wishing to participate in the parade that did not receive an application is asked to contact the Chamber office at 724-627-5926 to register for the event or download the parade application by visiting the Chamber website at www.waynesburgchamber.com.

Also on Dec. 6, the Rotary Club of Waynesburg will present its fifth annual Winter Wonderland Gala at the Greene County Courthouse from 6 to 9 p.m.

The Rotary Club invites the public to come share the beginning of the winter season with friends and neighbors for an evening of food, desserts, music and wine tasting.

Desserts will be provided by Willow Tree Farm and Chatty Cupcakes; decorations will be furnished by The Perfect Arrangement; food will be provided by Back Bay Catering, Greene County Career and Technology Center and Hot Rod's House of BBQ; wine tasting and sales will be furnished by Thistlethwaite Vineyards; and seasonal entertainment will be provided by Amanda Frampton and Allie Christopher, Brittany and Holly Blair, Claire Kreider and Lucien Schroyer, Ferdinand Dolfi, Nelson Fox and the Waynesburg Central High School Choir.

Tickets for the gala are \$75 per couple and \$40 per person.

Proceeds from the event will benefit Greene County charities.

The deadline for reservations is Dec. 1. For reservations, contact Barbara Wise at 724-255-5975 or email barbwiseunitedway@windstream.net. Make checks payable to Rotary Club of Waynesburg and mail to 748 E. High St., Waynesburg PA 15370.