

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

By Lorraine Payette

The holiday season is fast upon us, and it just wouldn't feel right without the Santa Claus parades to brighten things up. Throughout the region, communities go out and light up their streets, decorate homes and shop windows, and set an amazing stage for the Clauses to come out and strut their stuff. Be sure to get out and attend – the magic is there for the taking.



Athens

Saturday December 6th, 7:00 pm

An evening parade, organized by Dale Howard of Howard's Bus Service (613-924-2720), with involvement from the Athens Santa Claus Parade Committee, Athens Chamber of Commerce and the Athens Lions Club. The entire community is invited to participate. Prizes are awarded to participants for Best Original, Best Horses, Best Religious and Best Walkers. Free hot chocolate along the route and a visit with Santa after the parade at Howard's Bus Service.

Brockville

Saturday November 29th, 2:00 pm

This is a daytime celebration, organized by the Rotary clubs of Brockville with help from other community groups and involvement of Santa Claus and kids of all ages. There are 60-85 participants in the yearly parade, along with collections of letters to Santa, canned foods for the food bank and snowsuits in support of the Kinsmen snowsuit drive. Awards are given for Best Overall entry (1st – 3rd place), Best Band, Most Humorous entry, Best Walking Entry, Best Clown and deserving honourable mentions.

"Everybody, young and old, is invited to participate, and we have a few surprises in store for this year," says Doug Phillips, Parade Chair.

Cardinal/Spencerville

Friday, December 5th, 7:00 pm

Called the Starlight Parade, this is an evening event, organized by the Edwardsburgh/Cardinal Fire Department, with involvement from family, business and non profit organizations. The parade usually involves about 20 entries, and is getting larger every year. This season's theme is "A Christmas Remembered", with floats and marchers encouraged to design their entries accordingly. Special to Spencerville is "A Country Christmas Remembered" weekend in the town, based on a 1930's Christmas. It is the 10th anniversary festival this year.

Gananoque

Saturday, November 29th, 4:30 pm

A twilight parade, organized by the BIA, the entire community is involved, including Teams, Businesses, Churches, Organizations and members of the public. The parade usually involves 56 entries, with official rules and regulations kits available from the BIA office, 613-382-9900. Special guests for this parade are the Toronto Signals Band who have played throughout North America since 1926. Parade viewers are encouraged to bring non-perishable food donations for the food bank and Salvation Army.

"We are also working on a special surprise at the end of the parade," says Lisa Bird, BIA. "However, a very diminutive little creature, Quinton Elf, who is in charge of Santa's sleigh, has sworn us to secrecy..."

Lansdowne

Sunday, November 16th, 2:00 pm.

A daytime parade, organized by the Lansdowne Agricultural Society, it involves merchants from the Township, Royalty from the summer Lansdowne Fair i.e. Mini King & Queen, Youth Fair Ambassador, Fair Ambassador, owners of horse teams, Municipal, Provincial and Federal Government representatives, groups like Dreams in Motion, along with a lot of help from the local OPP detachment. There are usually 35 groups participating, with this year's

theme focusing on the 150th Anniversary of the Lansdowne Fair. The parade ends at the Lansdowne Community Building, where all are invited inside to warm up with hot dogs and drinks, a chilli contest and face painting. Kids write letters to Santa, visit him and can have their photo taken with him. Prizes are awarded to Parade participants.

"Begin your holiday season with the Lansdowne Santa Claus Parade and After Party with Santa," says Kim George of LAS. "All it costs is a smile!"

Lyndhurst

Saturday, November 15, 2:00 pm

This is a daytime parade, organized by the Lyndhurst Santa Claus Parade Committee, made up of a group of about ten volunteers from the community. Everyone is invited to participate, and there are usually about 30 entries including floats, bands, horses, cars and even people and dogs dressed up for the occasion. Unlike most parades, it can be viewed from both sides as it winds its way down the parade route to the stone bridge, then turns around and comes back again. All participants get free hot chocolate and hot dogs. At the end of the parade, Santa is at the library to visit with children and give out candy.

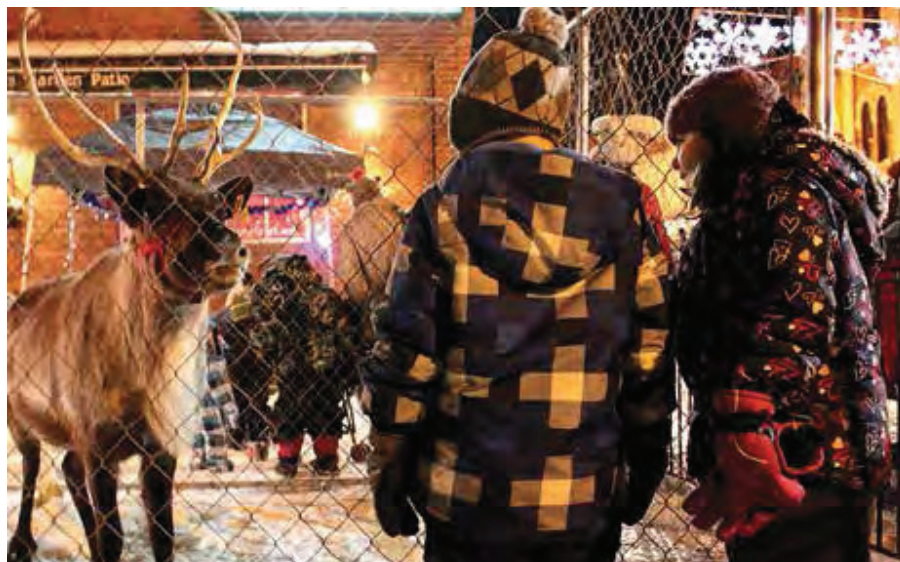
"The Lyndhurst Santa parade has been a loved community event for over 30 years," says Terri Dawson, parade volunteer. "We have lots of small town charm and our local businesses can be counted on for creative often home-spun floats. All floats and marchers are welcome, no need to pre-register, and there are cash prizes for best entries."

Mallorytown

Sunday, December 7th, 5:00 pm

A night time parade, organized by the Township via the Front of Yonge Christmas Parade Committee, anyone in or near the Township who is interested can enter a float. A collection of 30-40 floats, bands and other marchers participate, including neighbouring township fire departments, the Senator, MP, MPP and the Brockville Lions Steel Band. There are post parade treats, announcement of winners and Santa is available to meet the kids for pictures at the Community Centre. FOY also offers an Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony with Carolling, Free Treats and Hot Chocolate on Thursday, November 20th at 6:00 pm at the Township Office.

"Come celebrate the Christmas season with us in Mallorytown at our Tree Lighting ceremony and parade, as we show we are 'Yonge and Active', promoting fun, games, sports and healthy living in our community!" says Sean Burns, Committee Chair.



Prescott

Friday, November 21st, 7:00 pm

Their 16th annual night time event, the parade has been organized by the Prescott Fire Department for the past 60 years and starts from South Grenville High School. Volunteer firefighters, BIA and local businesses participate, with the town and local area encouraged to join the fun. Bands come from all over, and the Kinsmen Club runs the Spirit of Giving Campaign. The parade has recently had 75 floats by organizations/businesses and 7 bands. They are planning to have the Governor General's Foot Guard Band in for a return performance. Prior to the parade, various organizations provide musical entertainment and food for purchase (hot dogs/ hot chocolate), and Royal Canadian Legion Branch 97 organizes a yearly spaghetti dinner.

"The Prescott Fire Department takes great pride in organizing and running the annual Santa Claus parade and encourages all participants to 'Help Santa Light Up the Night' during our 16th yearly night parade," says Brent Norton, Parade Co-chair. "You can never have too many lights!" LH

