

Salem tree lighting kicks off holiday season Nov. 25

November 18, 2011 | Amanda Stonely, Globe Staff

The following was submitted by Salem Main Streets:

SALEM, Mass. (Nov. 15, 2011)— The holiday spirit is in the air downtown Salem with holiday wreaths, a holiday tree, window decorating contest, fantastic shopping and dining and Santa's arrival on the roof of the Hawthorne Hotel scheduled for December 2. We invite all to experience the excitement that fills the crisp, winter air in the historic streets of downtown Salem. Shop, Dine and enjoy downtown Salem.

The season will kick off with a downtown tree lighting with Mayor Driscoll Friday, November 25 at 6:30 p.m. This over 20' tree is a donation by Salem Main Streets, Benjamin Nutter Architect, LLC and Meeting House Church. It will be placed in the visible location of Lappin Park at the corner of Essex and Washington St. behind the Samantha statue. The City of Salem, Downtown Businesses, RCG are also contributing to make this event possible. Music provided by the Paul Madore Singers starting at 6 p.m.

The following Friday, December 2 at 5:30 p.m. Santa Claus will arrive in Salem as he traditionally does on the roof of the Hawthorne Hotel. The Salem Fire Company is expected to assist him with their ladder truck. He will proceed from there to the Museum Place Mall to hear the wishes of children. Music provided by The Dejas.

Thanksgiving weekend is also the kick off for Salem's window decorating contest. As you shop the downtown, be sure to look for the gingerbread men and women hiding in downtown windows. The SMS Design Committee will be selecting the winners most original and most traditional windows.

New this year is a Salem Shopping Open House Night Friday, December 16. Downtown stores will remain open until at least 7 p.m. and a cash prize raffle will be held to encourage shoppers to visit numerous businesses.

"Store windows covered in decorations, a brightly-lit tree standing tall in downtown Salem, evergreen wreaths hanging from the lampposts along charming brick lined streets, signify the holidays in Salem. There are so many reasons to do your holiday shopping downtown this year." said Jennifer Bell, Salem Main Streets Manager. Decorations are to be in place by Thanksgiving just in time for Black Friday shopping.

For the first time ever a Salem Winter Farmers' Market is being held in Artists' Row on Thursdays from 2 — 6 p.m. This is a great opportunity for holiday shopping whether your interest is fresh vegetables, mushrooms, delicious pies, fresh bread, seasoned butter or seasonal greens. There is also an art building with wonderful gift ideas created by local artists.

So shop, dine, and experience the true magic of historic downtown Salem this December. Salem Main Streets is located at 265 Essex Street in Salem, MA. 01970. For more information about any of these events, contact Jennifer Bell at (978)744-0004, ext. 15, or visit www.salemmainstreets.org.

Schedule of Events:

Downtown tree lighting with Mayor Driscoll Friday, November 25 at 6:30 p.m. Lappin Park at the corner of Essex and Washington St. behind the Samantha statue

Friday, December 2 at 5:30 p.m. Santa Claus will arrive in Salem on the roof of the Hawthorne Hotel and proceed from there to the Museum Place Mall to hear the wishes of children.

December 16 Salem Open House Shopping Night Downtown Salem — shopping and refreshments at participating stores until 7 p.m. Raffle to follow.