



HOLIDAY SPARKLE BRINGS CHOO CHOO, EXOTIC ANIMALS, SANTA, AND SPECIAL BARGAINS TO DOWNTOWN GILLESPIE WEEKEND OF DECEMBER 2 AND 3

The Coal Country Chamber of Commerce has activities planned for Friday, December 2 and Saturday, December 3. Holiday Sparkle Open House will run from 3 p.m. until 7 p.m. on Friday, December 2 and from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturday. All during this time, downtown eateries will have special discounts and participating businesses will have special offers.



During the Holiday Sparkle Open House Hours, downtown businesses will be conducting sales and in-store promotions on both days. Downtown Gillespie businesses are going to showcase Holiday Sparkle with colorful displays of Christmas themes and enticing specials of the season while the Coal Country Chamber of Commerce Choo Choo chugs up and down Macoupin. Holiday shoppers and visitors can ride the Choo Choo FREE and stop in the retail shops to enjoy the warmth and the bargains.



The Coal Country Chamber of Commerce will host the Thirteenth Annual Snack with Santa at the Illinois Valley Rehab Center at 217 E. Walnut (next to the Gillespie Police station) from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 4. Santa will arrive at 8:30 at the Illinois Valley Rehab Center for Snack with Santa. He will stay until 11:30 to visit with each of the children attending and hear their special requests for Christmas. During the Snack with Santa, digital pictures of the child with Santa will be taken in front of a Christmas background. Clients and staff of the Illinois Valley Rehabilitation Center will do their usual beautiful decorating of the background. Each child will receive a snack of Prairie Farms milk or juice and a treat from hometown Veschak Bakery of Benld served the VFW Ladies Auxiliary 4547 of Gillespie. Each child will be given a ticket for a free ride on the CCCC Choo Choo and a free bag of food for the animals at the Reindeer Petting Zoo. There is a donation of \$5 for Snack with Santa which includes the digital photo, the snack, ticket to ride the Choo Choo, and ticket to buy a food bag.

Across the street from Snack with Santa is the Illinois Valley Barn in the Garden Gift Shop where delightful crafts which are handmade by clients of Illinois Valley are displayed and offered at special prices for this event. The shop will be open for business on December 3 from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

1st BancFinancial, A & C Insurance; Accents Florist and Gifts; Ageless Fitness Center; The Castle's Forgotten Treasures; Country Financial, Tina Olroyd, Financial Representative; CP's Five and Dime Restaurant; Dairy Queen of Gillespie; Dee Dee's Designs; FNB/Benld Banking Center; John Hicks Maytag Home Appliance Center; Michelle's Pharmacy of Gillespie; Papa JoDannis Pizzeria; Quality Flooring; Roma's Pizza, State F Agent; Subway of Gillespie; Sullivan's Drug of Gillespie; and Toprani's Sales are participating in Holiday Sparkle and Snack with Santa.



Ride the Coal Country Chamber Choo-Choo from one end of town to the other, and take the children to the Reindeer Petting Zoo. Besides the Alaskan Reindeer, full grown hump-backed camels, miniature donkeys, and pygmy goats can be petted and fed by the children from 9 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. in downtown Gillespie on Saturday, December 3.

Snack with Santa, the CCCC Choo Choo, Holiday Sparkle, and the Reindeer Petting Zoo and caroling will provide an opportunity for consumers to “Shop Local, Buy Local”, for celebration, and for enjoyment to kick off the holiday season in downtown Gillespie.

More information on Snack with Santa, the Choo Choo and other activities of the Coal Country Chamber of Commerce can be found on web site: www.coalcountrychamber.com and the Coal Country Facebook page. Please leave a message at 217-710-5218 if you wish to contact the Chamber or email at mrer@madisontelco.com.