Roaming Around Reidsville

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2020 is about to come to an end, and I know few (if any) who will be sad to see it go. The year of COVID-19 has isolated us as nothing else has in recent memory. As cases continue to climb, we are all united in hoping that vaccines will be available soon.

I have been proud to be a part of a City that has tried to give its citizens a little bit of "normal" as much as possible. Our employees have had to think "outside the box" to find ways to bring events to our citizens during these trying times. We couldn't do our annual Independence Day Celebration out at Lake Reidsville this past July, but we shot the fireworks display off from Jaycee Park to give our residents and visitors a short reprieve from their isolation. Traditional trick or treating was pretty much non-existent in 2020, but we offered, a few days earlier, a drive-through Spooktacular event for those children able to attend, again at Jaycee Ballpark.

In keeping with that theme of adapting to the situation, December will start off with the "Saving Christmas" weekend. Named by Star News, "Saving Christmas" will feature two events that have traditionally drawn people to downtown Reidsville. This year, like everything else, these events will be different in that they will be featured on Star News and social media rather than people viewing them in person.

Typically the downtown Christmas tree lighting and annual Christmas Parade have been held in November. In 2020, the first weekend of December will showcase these events with a different twist.

Christmas Tree Lighting – December 4th.
At 6 p.m. on Friday, December 4, Reidsville Mayor Jay Donecker, along with friends, will oversee the lighting of the downtown Christmas tree. Spectators won't be allowed, but you can watch the event on either Star News/WGSR or on the Reidsville Chamber & Visitors' Facebook

Live page. Veronica Jones will provide us with a Christmas song while the Academy of Dance will provide some entertaining dance routines to put us in the holiday spirit. And we are expecting TRE, our TEAM REIDSVILLE Elf, to put in an appearance. We may even get a few encouraging words from the big guy in the red suit as well.

Christmas Parade – December 6th.

This year we won't see the usual Christmas Parade sponsored by Star News traveling northward on Scales Street, but the local television station is encouraging residents to decorate their vehicles and gather in the parking lot behind City Hall & the Police Department. One of the reasons the 5 p.m. start time was selected was to give participants the opportunity to decorate their vehicles in lights. The cars, trucks and more will drive southward on Scales Street to disband at Williams Street. While short, this route will allow the decorated cars to travel through the "R" and past Star News, which will broadcast their "Saving Christmas" parade. Yes, it won't quite be the same since people won't be watching from the edge of Scales Street but instead, will watch from the safety of their homes. That is just one of the prices we have to pay in 2020. The parade will begin at 5 p.m. on Sunday, December 6. Contact WGSR if you are interested in participating.

Walking Story Book – *When Winter Comes*.

Also, last month downtown businesses participated in a Walking Story Book project that began at the Reidsville Public Library and focused on the children's book, *Gracias, Thanks*. The Walking Story Book continues in December based on the children's book, *When Winter Comes*. Pages from the book are displayed in participating stores downtown. Once you complete the walk, you can fill out the supplied bookmark and take it back to the library to be entered into a drawing to receive a free copy of the book.

Polar Express Drive-In Movie – December 12th.

But that's not all. You can take a ride on the "Polar Express" with a free viewing of the movie on Saturday, December 12, at 6:30 p.m. in the parking lot behind City Hall in downtown Reidsville. The Reidsville Downtown Corporation is hosting the drive-in movie, but this event is limited. You have to sign up in advance by reserving your spot on Eventbrite at this link, bit.ly/2UuoR1J. Kids are encouraged to come in their PJs. The Downtown Dog House, Kelly's Kitchen and Sip Coffee will be on site with food while Santa will also make an appearance. Each child will get a bagged craft to enjoy as well as a free book provided by the Rockingham County Partnership for Children. The gate opens at 5:30 p.m. but again, you must register since space is limited.

Enjoy the Season!

While crowd gathering is frowned upon in the year of COVID-19, you can still walk downtown with your family and enjoy the beautifully decorated windows of our downtown businesses. One

of the activities to help with the holiday spirit was a festive window decorating contest done last month.

Don't forget to help those in need!
As 2020 draws to a close, remember that there are a lot of people suffering out there due to lost income or jobs due to COVID-19 or for other reasons. If you are able, please support such worthy causes as the Salvation Army Angel Tree, local food banks, toy donation drives and more not only this holiday season but also year round.

The Reidsville Parks & Recreation Department each year holds a "Pay It Forward" Coat Drive. Donations are accepted through December 4th for this coat giveaway, which starts at 9 a.m. on Saturday, December 19. You can donate a gently used coat (or new) for all ages. Call 336-349-1090 for details about the event, including donations and giveaway location.

Also, continue to eat and shop local! Remember, small business owners especially have been fighting to survive. We are all in this together TEAM REIDSVILLE!