
Parade, tree ready to go

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Santa's Parade of Lights and the lighting of the Christmas tree at city hall are set for this Sunday at sundown.

Parade chairperson Dale Bast said 55 entries, including four bands, are registered for the parade that will start at 4:45 p.m. at the Allman Arena, head up Morenz Dr., turn onto Ontario St. and head to city hall before ending at the YMCA.

Encouraging creativity and lights this year are corporate and community awards of \$100 for the most creatively designed and best illuminated floats.

An addition to the parade lineup, Bast noted, will be the Waterloo Oriental Shrine Band, which he said is a crowd favourite wherever it goes.

The parade chair pointed out that honorary parade grand marshals will be Don McKone, Stu McTavish and Byron Wickie. The naval veterans of the Second World War are being specially recognized on the 100th anniversary of the Canadian navy.

Thanks to the city beautification and environmental awareness committee, the tree at city hall will be outfitted with new Christmas bows for the arrival, around 6 p.m., of Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Committee member Ted Blowes, who is also on the parade committee, said the old red and gold bows were tattered and needed to be replaced.

The civic-beautification committee is one of four organizations supporting the parade financially with \$500 contributions.

The [Optimist club](#), Lakeside Active Adults Club and Communities in Bloom are the other contributors.

Blowes said organizers are hoping for a bit of snow to add to the spirit of the evening parade.

"Snow always adds atmosphere," he said, recalling that last year's parade was rain-drenched. "It puts everybody in a better mood when the snow is coming down."

During the parade, free hot chocolate will be served outside Knox Presbyterian Church and free hot dogs, Timbits and hot chocolate will be available at city hall courtesy of the [Optimist Club of Stratford](#) and Tim Hortons.

The Lions Club will again be collecting eyeglasses for redistribution and Kiwanis Club volunteers will be accepting food donations for the Christmas Basket effort along the parade route.

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