

Making a difference... TOGETHER

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2003 Festival of Wreaths combines old favorites with new

Come Saturday, Nov. 22, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus will be busy hosts. They'll begin the day with "Breakfast with Santa," then continue with "Pizza with Santa." And the guests? They'll sparkle with delight.

"Every year we have just an unbelievable waiting list of people who want tickets for Breakfast with Santa, but we simply haven't been able to accommodate everyone. This year we're pleased to offer a new option — Pizza with Santa," says Sue Mertz, chairperson for the 19th annual Festival of Wreaths.



Like other years, Breakfast with Santa will take place at 9 a.m. Then at 12:30 p.m., a whole new group of children and their accompanying adults will be able to enjoy Green Mill Pizza with Santa. "It'll be different food and a different time, but everything else that makes Breakfast with Santa so popular will be the same — the gifts, the entertainment by Kids Kollectibles and the setting," says Sue. "This event has become a tradition for many families in the area, and this year twice as many people can enjoy it."

Pizza with Santa is just one of several special events at this year's Festival of Wreaths, which begins Friday, Nov. 21 and wraps up late-afternoon on Sunday, Nov. 23. All festivities take place at the Ramada Plaza Suites Crystal Ballroom in Fargo. "It's just a great way to usher in the holiday season, plus we try to include something for everyone," says Sue. "We keep the old favorites like the performances during Waltz of the Snowflakes, plus we always add a few new things to keep it fresh. For example, we've added wine tasting to the Opening Night Party."

Festival of Wreaths is a three-day holiday showcase. Proceeds from this year's event will go toward the renovation of MeritCare Children's Hospital. Located on the fourth floor of MeritCare Hospital in downtown Fargo, MeritCare Children's Hospital is a 56-bed hospital, complete with intensive care units for premature infants and children. Children and families from throughout the region have come here to receive specialized care.

Sue has a special place in her heart for children's hospitals across the nation because years ago her two sons benefited from their care. "From my own experience as a parent, I have seen that children really do need a special kind of care, and MeritCare Children's Hospital makes that level of care possible," she says.

For tickets to all events call (701) 234-6109 between 10 and 4, Monday-Friday.

A path of holiday treasures and delights...

Gingerbread Lane

Friday afternoon Andrea Hunter Halgrimson and Lyn Nichols of Forum Communications will be judging the Gingerbread Lane entries. Each year area high school culinary students and local chefs and artists spend hours creating their sugar-filled masterpieces. This year's theme is "Christmas at the North Pole." Once the houses (or castles, or barns, or cabins, or even dog houses) have been judged, they are available for sale.



Timeless Treasures Boutique

A great place to find holiday decorations plus a large array of unique holiday gift items. You can shop at all times during the Open House: Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m.

12 Days of Christmas

Each of these 12 packages are chock full of items centered on themes from "Wild Adventure" to "Down the Garden Path." One package will provide a full year's worth of entertainment including local concerts and a weekend getaway. Most packages will be available to bid on during the silent auction (held Friday night through the Gala on Saturday night), but some are so special they'll be selected for the live auction during the Gala.

Tiny Timbers

With close to 100 decorated trees that are under two-feet tall, there is a huge variety and one for any discriminating buyer. Some are theme-based and others favor traditional holiday decorations. All are made by businesses, individuals, local groups or schools. Each Tiny Timber is available as a cash-and-carry purchase.



Santa's Treat Shop

With all of the holiday sights, you'll want to try some holiday refreshments. Special gingerbread cookies, cider and other treats will be sold. Try some there and take a dozen or so cookies home.

Holiday Central

"It's amazing how after 18 years, we keep getting new and innovative wreaths and trees for this event from talented local artists," say Deb Soliah, MeritCare Foundation Executive Director. Unique, one-of-a-kind wreaths, centerpieces, Christmas trees and other items are created by area designers just for Festival of Wreaths. You can place a bid on each of these creations during the silent auction.

Waltz of the Snowflakes

A perennial favorite, Waltz of the Snowflakes features local performers and holiday music. "It's a wonderful chance for people who can't make it to the reserved events to listen to the sounds and see the wonderful sights of the holiday season." says Amy Arness, committee chair for Waltz of the Snowflakes. Three of the groups that will be highlighted this year are the Lake Agassiz Girl's Choir, the Red River Boys Choir, and the

3rd Street Acting Company. With your admission to the Open House, you are able to listen to one or all of these groups between 2 and 4 p.m. on Sunday.

...created just for this event



Open House Shopping Extravaganza

Saturday, Nov. 22, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 23, noon-4 p.m.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY AREAS

Gingerbread Lane

Sponsored by Park Co./GMAC Real Estate

Timeless Treasures Botique

Sponsored by MeritCare Auxiliary

12 Days of Christmas

Sponsored by Hannaher's

Tiny Timbers

Sponsored by Bremer Bank

Santa's Treat Shop

Sponsored by Roer's Construction

Waltz of the Snowflakes

Holiday Central

For more information and tickets call (701) 234-6190
between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday-Friday

19th Annual Festival of Wreaths

November 21-23, 2003

Ramada Plaza Suites

Fargo, North Dakota

Sponsored by

Royal Jewelers and DMS Health Group

Media Sponsor: Forum Communications

SPECIAL EVENTS

Opening Night Party with Graffiti

Sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank

Friday, November 21st 8:00 p.m.

(Reservations are not required for this event)

Breakfast with Santa

Sponsored by Cass Clay Creamery and Kohl's

Saturday, November 22nd 9:00 a.m.

Pizza with Santa

Sponsored by Alerus Financial and Kohl's

Saturday, November 22nd 12:30 p.m.

Gala

Sponsored by Imaging Solutions, Inc.

Saturday, November 22nd 6:00 p.m.

Holiday Brunch

Sponsored by State Bank & Trust

Sunday, November 23rd 11:30 a.m.

Reservations are required for special events.

Your year-end gift

The end of another year is within site and one item on many people's year-end checklist is tax planning. Making a donation by year-end will provide you with a donation credit and tax savings for 2003 if you itemize your taxes.

Contributions are deductible on a 2003 tax return only if "payment" is made during 2003. Pledges cannot be deducted until the contribution is actually paid. A check mailed or delivered to the Foundation on or before December 31st qualifies for a 2003 deduction. A giving envelope has been included in this newsletter for your convenience.

Contributions made by credit card are deductible in the year the account is charged. Online donations to MeritCare can be given at our secure site at www.foundation.meritcare.com.

Gifts of stock are welcome but remember that most stock and bond transactions require extra time to settle after the trade is made. Questions concerning this type of gift can be directed to your attorney or investment advisor or to Yvonne Kroll, Director of Major and Planned Giving at (701) 234-6422.



MeritCare
Foundation

www.foundation.meritcare.com

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We hope you'll join us for MeritCare Foundation's Festival of Wreaths,
November 21-23, 2003 at the Ramada Plaza Suites.

Festival of Wreaths details inside!



The Fox 107.9 FM along with their sister stations Froggy 99.9 FM, Lite Rock 105.1 FM, The Eagle 106.9 FM, and Q98 FM raised \$69,864.87 for the new Palliative Care Unit constructed at MeritCare South University. The Home Run/Walk raised another \$18,550 for a total of \$88,414.87 The Palliative Care Unit opened October 17th — a much needed addition to MeritCare's services. Thanks to those that donated their time and those that donated their dollars!

Another successful '61for61'



One of many drive-up donations given during 61for61.