

Christmas in Kentucky 14

## Richmond's Holiday calendar filled to the brim with cheer

By ANGIE MULLIKIN  
The Richmond Resource Community Editor

Whether it's going to the planetarium to see a laser light show or attending the Christmas parade downtown, Richmond is filled with ways to celebrate the holidays. The holiday season will begin with The Hummel Planetarium's presentation of Christmas Laser Fantasy and the Season of Light. The Christmas Laser Fantasy will set traditional Christmas Carols to a corresponding laser show.

The event runs on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 6 p.m. and on Saturday afternoons at 2 p.m. now until Dec. 23. The Season of Light begins with a look at the winter sky as seen during December. Many constellations are highlighted and the program illustrates why there are seasons on earth.

The program then recounts the historical, religious and cultural rituals practiced during the time of the winter solstice, including Christian, Jewish, Celtic, Nordic, Roman,

Egyptian and Hopti. It also talks about traditions such as gift-giving, kissing under the mistletoe, music, decorations and the many forms of Santa Claus.

The remainder of the program tries to explain the reasons of the "Star of Bethlehem. The planetarium star projector is turned back 2000 years to look at the sky as it was over Bethlehem during the period of 3 to 2 B.C. The Season of Light runs now through Dec. 23 on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m. and on at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday. Tickets cost \$4 for adults, \$3.50 for students and seniors and \$3 for children 12 and under. For more information call 859-623-4704.

On Dec. 1, the city of Richmond will kickoff the holiday season with a tree lighting at the courthouse at 6:30 p.m. and the annual Christmas parade at 7 p.m. For more information people may call the tourism department at 626-8474.

Also on Dec. 1, the Richmond

Arts Area Center will sponsor an open house from 6 to 9 p.m. Cider and cookies will be served as guests stroll through the historic building built in the late 1880s. Programming information will also be available.

Call 859-624-4242 for more information. The Madison County Extension Office and the Madison County Public Library will come together on Dec. 1 to share recipes and craft ideas with anyone who wants to join them from 9 a.m. to noon. The theme of "Gifts Galore and More" will give ideas for giving gifts from the kitchen such as soap mixes, "cookies in a jar" and spiced tea. The event is free and open to the public. For more information call 859-623-4704.

The Fort Booneborough Christmas Market will take place from Dec. 1 through 3. The market includes items from 40 unique Kentucky artisans that exhibit and sell their work. Items to be sold include pottery, dollhouses, sterling silver and amber jewelry. Christmas items, your wood items and wooden hats all in

the setting of the decorated fort. Call 859-627-3131 for more information.

On Dec. 2, the city of Richmond will present the Richmond Christmas Celebration. The celebration includes special holiday shopping, free carriage rides, a guided auditory walking tour, visits from Santa and more. For more information call 859-626-8474 or 859-623-8762.

In conjunction with the Richmond Christmas Celebration the Richmond Parks and Recreation Department will present "A Holiday Happening" craft fair at the Richmond Parks and Recreation Department at 321 N. Second Street. The sale will include Christmas items and other handmade crafts. Call 859-623-8763 for more information.

Victorian Christmas at White Hall State Historic House is a historic holiday event that runs from Dec. 8 to 10. The historic house that belonged to Cassia Clay is lavished in Victorian decorations. While people tour the

house, a harpist plays music while refreshments are served. Tickets for adults cost \$4.50. Call 859-625-9178 for more information.

Also many school, business, and church events will take place throughout the season. The First United Methodist Church will present a free Christmas bell choir concert at 6 p.m. on Dec. 1 that is free to the public. The Christmas sampler is provided by the First United Methodist Church on West Main Street. Call 859-623-3540 for more information.

On Dec. 2, the 414 Means Business Club will have a showcase and sale. The sale will include crafts, holiday decoration and baked goods handmade by Madison County 4-H members. The sale will take place at the First Christian Church from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call 859-623-4070 for more information.

Many more events are scheduled for the city. Please contact the Richmond Tourism Department at 859-626-8474 for a complete listing of events including many church bazaars.

## Heritage, tradition are winter's great wealth

In history's terms, many holiday traditions haven't been around all that long.

It was only about 150 years ago, notes Clemson University English professor Jim Andreas, that England's Queen Victoria and her consort Prince Albert started the practice of sending Christmas cards.

The Christmas tree first appeared in Germany in the 19th century and was probably introduced by Albert, a German, to English and American celebrations.

The exchange of gifts also began in the 19th century, though Christmas boxes and wrappings may go back to the third or fourth centuries, when they were used as gratuity boxes given to apprentices and the poor — who carried them about in hopes of getting food, money and gifts.

The importance of holly as a Christmas decoration also goes back to the third or fourth centuries, Andreas says. Its leaves and thorns were thought to symbolize the mock crowns worn by Christ during his crucifixion, and the berries symbolized drops of blood.

For centuries, people have used holly to decorate as a way of bringing greenery, and its promise of spring, into their homes in the dead of winter. Saint Nick has been around since the Middle Ages, in the tradition of a monk called St. Nicholas, who gave out presents to needy children.

Traditions continue to evolve, preserving past traditions while starting new ones. So let the celebrations begin.

### Hudson River Holidays

Holiday lights of a gentler era can be enjoyed through candlelight tours of historic properties along the Hudson River, concentrated around the Tarrytown, N.Y., area.

One of them, Phillipsburg Manor in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y., begins the season with a Dutch-style family celebration of St. Nicholas Day, Dec. 5 and 12. St. Nicholas makes appearances to tell the story of his miracles and reward children for their good deeds during the year. The manor house is decorated for the holidays, and visitors can tour the farm, mill and grounds.

Sunside in nearby

Tarrytown, where the writer Washington Irving once lived, is setting for a mid-19th century American holiday celebration, with candlelight tours on Dec. 11, 12, 17, 18, and 19. Among favorite Irving stories are "Old Christmas" and "Bracebridge Hall" — which introduced English Christmas customs to American readers.

Also in Tarrytown is the stately gilded age mansion, Lyndhurst, open for candlelight tours Dec. 4, 11, 12, 18, 19 and 26. The estate, once home to railroad baron Jay Gould, is now owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Holiday traditions of a wealthy 19th century New York family are recaptured Dec. 17, 18, 19 and 26 at the Van Cortlandt Manor, a few miles north of Tarrytown in Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y. The manor house is decorated with exotic fruits, greenery and the "kissing bell," while Twelfth Night festivities are underway at the tavern.

Horse-drawn carriage or sleigh rides — with views of the river and the Catskill Mountains — will be part of

holiday doings at Montgomery Place, a 19th century estate located further north in the Armandville-on-Hudson, N.Y. "Visions of Sugar Plums," daytime celebrations with decorations, music and activities, is scheduled Dec. 4, 5, 11 and 12. For more information and reservations about Lyndhurst, call (914) 631-4481. For information about the other properties, call Historic Hudson Valley at (914) 631-8200, ext. 618.

### Vienna Boys Choir

The Vienna Boys Choir will be singing holiday favorites for American audiences after Thanksgiving in 17 cities, including Boston Dec. 8 and 9 and New York City Dec. 17. Performances also are scheduled for Hutchinson, Kan.; Overland Park, Kan.; Columbia, Mo.; Des Moines, Iowa; Indianapolis; La Crosse, Wis.; Keene, N.H.; Mashpee, Mass.; Torrington, Conn.; Easton, Pa.; Baltimore; Glenside, Pa.; New Brunswick, N.J.; and Newark, N.J. For information, check the Web site at <http://www.wk.at>.

There will be holiday candlelight tours of the Billmore Estate in Asheville, N.C., nearly every night between Nov. 8 and Jan. 1.

The 250-room French Renaissance chateau, built by George Vanderbilt, is seen for a 19th century-style celebration, with decorations of fresh greenery, dried flowers, twigs and colorful berries blended with crystal ornaments, beads, and silk ribbons.

Artisans from around the western North Carolina region provide the talent for the "Festival of Trees," Nov. 26-Dec. 5 in Biltmore Square Mall. On show are 200 Christmas trees — from miniatures to life-size design creations. Kwanzaa — meaning "the first fruits of harvest" and revered by black Americans — is celebrated starting Dec. 26 at the YMI Cultural Center in Asheville. The event focuses on lighting of ceremonial Kinara candles, ethnic music, readings and foods. For information, call 1 (888) 247-9811; Web site is <http://www.wk.at>. Please See TRADITIONS, Page 17

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