

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Downtown Springfield, Inc.

2011 Old Capitol Holiday Walk – December 7,8,14,21

Downtown Springfield

St. John's Children's Hospital and Downtown Springfield, Inc., present the annual Old Capitol Holiday Walk, December 7,8,14, and 21; from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Shop local and experience holiday tradition with a twist - stroll the festive streets of downtown and enjoy unique shopping and dining, Gingerbread House displays, free entertainment, horse-drawn trolley rides, free shuttle van, lighted holiday tree and more! The Santa House is open during the evenings of the Walk from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. and the Saturdays prior to Christmas from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Santa House will also be open, approximately 11:00 a.m., immediately following the Christmas Parade, December 3, until 2:00 p.m. Children receive a free photo with Santa and candy cane, courtesy of St. John's Children's Hospital.

Mayor Mike Houston will kick off the Holiday Walk festivities with a tree lighting ceremony on December 7 at 5:30 p.m. on the Old State Capitol Plaza at the corner of 6th & Adams Streets. Live Christmas music provided by Land of Lincoln Chorus. The Rochester High School Madrigals will also be strolling and caroling from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Twelve beautifully decorated Gingerbread Houses will be on display and available for raffle. Raffle tickets are \$5 each and available at each location. Winners will be drawn December 22; proceeds benefit the Springfield Area Arts Council. For more information call 217-753-3519.

The National Survey Museum located at 521 E. Washington Street will host a children's coloring project that can be projected onto their 60" world class "Science on a Sphere". They will also serve as the collection site for non-perishable food items benefitting the Central Illinois Food Bank. Receive \$1 off admission with food donation.

The Lincoln Herndon Law Office will host free children's entertainment each evening of the Walk from 6:00 – 7 00 p.m. featuring The DePriest Puppets, Interactive Music with Nick Sperry, Magician Jeff Harpring, and a Sing-A-Long with ElvisHimself. The Old State Capitol will present "Meet a Boy in Blue" and "House Divided Tour by Candlelight" during each evening of the Walk. Photographer Robert Shaw will be signing the book he co-wrote with Lincoln Scholar, Michael Burlingame called "Abraham Lincoln Traveled this Way." He will be at the 1840's Post Office near Tinsley's Dry Goods store, 209 S. 6th.

Twenty-seven downtown businesses are official Holiday Walk destinations, with eighteen joining forces to offer a total of \$900 in merchandise gift certificate giveaways! Shoppers may pick up their raffle card from participating retailers and the Midwest Family Broadcasting Studio on Fifth Street. Shoppers have between December 7 and December 21 to visit each participating location and turn in the raffle card. The winners will be

notified by phone and announced by Midwest Family Broadcasting on December 22. In addition, a variety of participating merchants will host live entertainment, guest artists and offer food and drink specials throughout the Walks.

Old Capitol Holiday shoppers will find convenient parking in the underground garage beneath the Old State Capitol until 9:00 p.m. during the evenings of the Walk; the cost is 75 cents per half hour. Parking for shoppers is free at downtown meters after 5 p.m.

Celebrating their 375th Birthday, The National Guard will join the Holiday Walk December 14, 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. A variety of displays and interactive programs will be held at the Old State Capitol, The National Museum of Surveying and on Washington Street between 5th & 6th, featuring enactors in military uniforms from WWII, WWI, Korea/Vietnam, and the Civil War era; a static vehicle and equipment display, and a Firing Range Laser Simulator. For more information contact 217-761-3569 or ngilstaffpao@ng.army.mil.

The Holiday Walk is presented by St. John's Children's Hospital in partnership with Downtown Springfield, Inc., and the City of Springfield; and sponsored by Mid West Family Broadcasting, Memorial Medical Center, State Journal Register, Town & Country Bank, Myers Commercial Properties, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel & Conference Center, Illinois Manufacturers Association, WSEC, Dig-it-All Designs, Café Brio, Illinois Times, Springfield Area Arts Council, Illinois Arts Council, Old State Capitol Foundation, and St. Andrews Society of Central Illinois Ancient Athletics. Also, a special thanks to INB and Dellert's for donating a new tree and carpet for the Santa House; and Honey Bear Tree Farm for donating the outdoor holiday tree.

For a complete list of participating merchants, entertainment schedule and event updates, contact Downtown Springfield, Inc. at 217-544-1723 or visit www.downtownspringfield.org.