

GREENFIELD

‘A lot of new life’ on tap for JingleFest

Under leadership of Recreation Department, event will have expanded offerings

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For the Recorder

GREENFIELD — For residents looking to celebrate the holiday season, the Greenfield Business Association and the Greenfield Recreation Department are offering JingleFest.

The 12th annual JingleFest, scheduled for Friday, Dec. 5, with the earliest events starting at noon, and continuing on Saturday, Dec. 6, until 4 p.m., will have expanded offerings this year. The Greenfield Business Association, which previously spearheaded the event, has transferred leadership to the Greenfield Recreation Department.

“The big change this year is that the Recreation Department took over JingleFest from the Business Association, which is absolutely wonderful,” said Greenfield Business Association Director Hannah Rechtschaffen. “The GBA had been organizing and overseeing JingleFest for a long time, and we really needed a group to do it that had a lot more capacity than we did.”

According to Rechtschaffen, since the Recreation Department already organizes many Greenfield events, it was able to use its skills to “bring a lot of new life” to JingleFest.

The Recreation Depart-



Santa helps light the Christmas tree at Veterans Mall during the 2024 JingleFest.

PAUL FRANZ / Staff File Photo

ment had previously been involved in JingleFest, but only to organize the Amazing Race, where teams race around Greenfield tackling challenges and competing for prizes. Recreation Director Christy Moore said she is happy about all the new offerings the Recreation Department has been able to add to JingleFest.

“We have all these workshops — you can learn to do

cookie decorating, you can decorate a wreath, you can decorate a bow and a branch. So, there’s all these different activities. You can take a horse-drawn wagon ride,” Moore said. “I hope people build gingerbread houses so we can have a competition and give out cool prizes. I hope people dig out their ugly, ancient sweaters for the Ugly Sweater Competition. And the GBA has also pulled together

the Maker’s Market downtown, where people can buy holiday gifts.”

Other features of JingleFest include the traditional tree lighting at Veterans Mall on Friday evening, special holiday screenings at the Garden Cinemas, pictures with Santa, live entertainment on Saturday, and arts and crafts activities at the library. The full schedule for JingleFest can be found at greenfieldrecreation.com/jinglefest.html.

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The GBA is still involved in getting businesses to participate in JingleFest.

“We do a lot of business outreach. We email businesses and walk in and make sure they know the event is going on. We encourage them to offer specials and encourage them to have later hours,” Rechtschaffen explained. “And a lot of businesses get excited, because events like

these bring people downtown. So, it’s just an opportunity for people to come and explore Greenfield.”

While JingleFest is an ideal opportunity to spend money at local businesses, Rechtschaffen noted that JingleFest has plenty of free offerings for attendees, too.

“I think sometimes people think because it’s the holidays, everything is centered around shopping, but [JingleFest] is a very choose-your-own-adventure kind of thing,” she said. “The Amazing Race is free to register for. You can also enter the gingerbread house competition for free. If people check out the schedule, there’s so many ways for people to get involved.”

Rechtschaffen has her own favorite event, which is the Maker’s Market, to be held at 176 Main St. from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

On top of being a celebration of Christmas, JingleFest is also a celebration of all that Greenfield has to offer.

“People don’t realize how many businesses there are and how many cool things there are [in Greenfield], and sometimes it takes an event to bring people back downtown,” Rechtschaffen said. “I’m proud of our businesses.”

“It’s an opportunity for people to come together and enjoy the heart of downtown Greenfield for the holidays,” Moore added. “There will be lights, there will be laughter, there will be songs to sing, so hopefully we entice them to get into the holiday spirit.”