

Stronger Together asks community for input Festival of Trees

Fifteen decorated Christmas trees will be on display at the second annual Festival of Trees at the historic Akron Opera House during the Hometown Christmas celebration from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 30.

Admission is free; donations will be accepted for projects, including the sound system upgrade and building façade restoration.

The Stronger Together: Akron and Westfield program will also be asking for attendees to help with a special group of trees with ideas to make our community stronger.

Over the last year, community members more than 300 surveys sharing their feelings they love about Akron, Westfield and the surrounding area and what they hope for the future. Volunteered every response and compiled back into six Heart & Soul statements to capture the values and priorities that community members shared. These values will drive the next phase of the process, which is defining the goals and action steps for our communities.

At the festival, volunteers will be gathering feedback on these statements and gathering suggestions for action items to help support these statements. All ideas are welcome, from the biggest dream to the smallest suggestion! Everyone who completes the activity will be entered to win \$50 in Akron Chamber Bucks or gift cards to local businesses.

The draft Heart & Soul statements include:

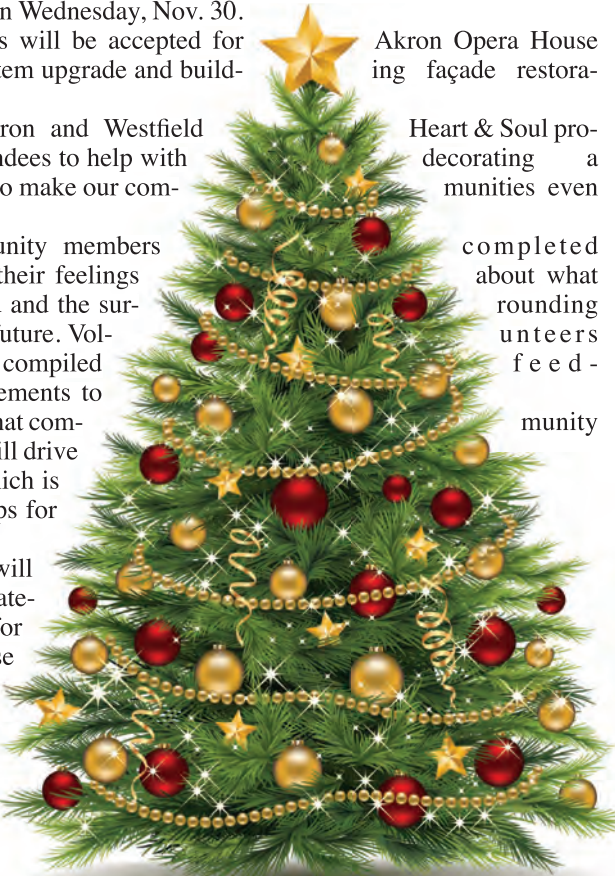
- **Active, Engaged & Growing Communities:** We appreciate being part of an engaged community that actively brings events and activities that help attract people, drive growth and provide opportunities for everyone.
- **Community Pride & Small Town Feel:** We cherish the close knit, small town feel of our communities, where people are willing to help each other to provide a safe environment for residents of all ages. We take pride in the look, feel and character of our towns today and for future residents and support collaborative efforts towards maintaining and improving our communities.
- **Nature & Outdoor Activities:** We appreciate the unique features and natural beauty of the Loess Hills, attracting people of all ages and abilities for camping, hiking, fishing and other recreation opportunities and contributing to the overall health of our community.
- **Thriving, Supportive Businesses:** We value the wide range of local businesses that allow us to meet most needs close to home, and appreciate the support that those businesses give to our communities.
- **Commitment To Education:** We recognize the value of education to the future success and growth of our community, and we strive to provide opportunities for community members to be lifelong learners.
- **Vibrant Arts & Culture:** We treasure our community's strong support for music, fine and visual arts and their place in providing entertainment opportunities and building connections among residents of all ages.

Following the Festival of Trees, there will be several additional opportunities for community members to share their feedback. Watch Stronger Together: Akron and Westfield Heart & Soul on Facebook or www.StrongerTogetherHeartSoul.com for details and updates.

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Holiday traditions come to life at Akron's Hometown Christmas

The annual Hometown Christmas celebration in Akron, will feature activities and fun for all ages from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 30, sponsored by the Akron Area Chamber of Commerce and area businesses and organizations.

The event will begin with the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus at 5:00 p.m. The Clauses will receive a special escort through town from the Akron Fire-Rescue Department, ending with the lighting of the community Christmas tree in front of the Legion Hall at the corner of Reed and Fourth streets.

Following the tree lighting, Santa and Mrs. Claus will be visiting with families at the Akron Public Library. Children can also leave letters to Santa, and those with a return address will receive a response from Santa and Mrs. Claus themselves.

"Holiday traditions truly come to life at the Akron Hometown Christmas celebration, from Santa's special arrival on a fire truck to caroling, bell choir, beautiful trees, decorations and fun, family-friendly activities," said Lori Rabey, president of the Akron Chamber of Commerce and assistant branch manager of Security National Bank, Akron branch.

Hometown Christmas events and activities include:

- Open houses, holiday treats and craft activities for children at downtown businesses on Reed Street, the Akron Lumber Company, and The Spot Espresso Bar & Café.
- A Festival of Trees at the historic Akron Opera House, hosted by Stronger Together Akron and

Westfield Heart & Soul, featuring trees decorated by community members, businesses and organizations.

Don't forget to vote for your favorite to win the People's Choice award, and complete the Stronger Together activity to share ideas about the future of the Akron and Westfield communities.

The Akron Care Center Bell Choir will perform at the lobby of the Akron Post Office at 5:30 p.m.

The Akron Public Library will host a selfie scavenger hunt. Pick up instructions at the library.

Carolers will perform at Chub's Country Store, including Curt Allen at 5:00 p.m., Keri Kluender at 5:30 p.m., and Johnson Juniors

4-H Club at 6:00 p.m. Free hot chocolate will be available, too.

The New Horizons United Church of Christ will host a Living Nativity.

American Legion Post No. 186 Albert E Hoschler will create a military-themed window display at Dirks Hardware.

Akron Area Chamber of Commerce will sell discounted Akron Chamber bucks at the walk-up window at Security National Bank.

For more information and details, visit the Akron Chamber of Commerce Facebook page at www.facebook.com/AkronAreaChamberOfCommerce/ or website at www.AkronIowaChamber.com.

Akron Area Community Christmas Program

Sunday, Dec. 4

2 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church



Where do you read your Akron Hometownner?



Martha Morin read her Akron Hometownner with her grandkids (l-r:) Addi, Kenz, and Harvey Dankof while visiting her youngest daughter, Callie Dankof, and her family in Chesapeake, Va.

There's no 'wrong' place to read your Akron Hometownner

Just ask Addi, Kenz, Harvey and Martha!

Call 568-2208 to get your subscription.

County Museum presents 'Baby, It's Cold Outside!'

If you need to warm up after the Le Mars Lighted Christmas Parade Saturday night, Dec. 3, the Plymouth County Historical Museum's event, "Baby, It's Cold Outside!" will be the place to go.

Homemade hot chocolate and hot cider will be available in the first-floor Welcome Room, located near the Museum's front door. Adjacent to the Welcome Room, the Museum's Mini-Mart will feature many Christmas items for shoppers.

Visitors also will be able to see hundreds of nativities displayed in the Museum's 1905 Study Hall on the fourth floor before heading for the Pioneer Village Wonderland at the fairgrounds.

Admission to "Baby, It's Cold Outside!" is free. The Museum is located at 335 First Ave. SW, just one block to the west of the lighted parade route. All floors are fully accessible.

Museum to host Christmas concert

"Sounds of the Season" will be the theme for the annual Christmas open house at the Plymouth County Historical Museum Sunday, Dec. 4.

The 2 p.m. concert by the piano students of Inez Hoogeveen of Le Mars will be in the Museum's Study Hall, among the nativities.

Holiday refreshments will be served following the concert. The Museum is located at 335 First Ave. SW. All five floors are fully accessible.



Overseeing the Plymouth County Historical Museum's nativity display this year are (l-r:) volunteer Chrissy Graettinger and Museum board members Danni Love, Julie Arens, and Wanda Wichers. The nativities will be on view in the Study Hall during Museum open hours, 1 to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday, and will be open through Epiphany Jan. 6, 2023. They also may be seen following the lighted Christmas parade Dec. 3.