



# Rockton-Roscoe News

December 2023 ♦ Special Holiday Edition ♦ Published Daily at [roscoenews.com](http://roscoenews.com)  
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## Holiday festivities in the Stateline

By Marianne Mueller 

Tis the season for giving and celebrations.

Rockton will be bustling with excitement from Dec. 1-3, 2023 as the Rockton Christmas Walk returns. Bring your family and your friends to this festive tradition, now in its 39th year.

Roscoe's Hometown Holidays promises loads of fun on Saturday, Dec. 9. This fun holiday themed event is a partnership between the Village of Roscoe, elev815 and the Harlem-Roscoe Fire Protection District. Music, baby reindeer, games and prizes, crafts for kids, food trucks, visit with Santa or write a letter to Santa plus many more activities will fill Roscoe's Main Street from 3-7 p.m.

In South Beloit, Nature At the Confluence invites everyone to an evening of seasonal fun at the South Beloit Holiday Tree Lighting on Friday, Dec. 1 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Ongoing activities also include a bonfire and making 's'mores. As a bonus, there is going to be unlimited hot cocoa - just bring your own mug. Get

imagination rolling by doing holiday crafts and take time to capture memories of the day by taking family photos. The tree lighting is slated for 5 p.m. followed by the performing of Christmas carols. Parking and other details are listed on the Nature at the Confluence Facebook web page. This event is a partnership between The City of South Beloit, Nature at the Confluence and South Beloit Public Library.

Rockton Firefighters Association is asking the public to help "Fill the Truck for Toys for Tots" Bring a new unwrapped toy to the collection site at 201 N. Blackhawk Blvd. They will be collecting toys seven days a week from 8 a.m until 8 p.m., until Dec. 20.

On Saturday, Dec. 2 Roscoe Middle School is hosting "A Very Merry Pop Up Shop" at the school. Doors open at 10 a.m to find that one of a kind Christmas present from a local crafter, or a small business owner. Money raised from this event is in support of "Camp I Am" which is a pediatric burn survivor camp in Illinois.



Quinley Hale visited with Santa after breakfast at the 2022 Rockton Christmas Walk. Photo: Jean Seegers

In loving memory of Katie Cronin who passed away 20 years ago, her family is sponsoring a luminary for the entire Rockton community this year. Honor her memory by making the season brighter, as Katie did in decorating the Village Green Park for years, by lining your sidewalks in beautiful lights. Two stations are available to pick up luminaria, one at the Village Hall and the other at the Walt Williamson Pool.

Rockton PTO is organizing "A Very Merry Holiday Shoppe and Vendor Pop-Up." This event is specifically geared toward students in the Rockton School District and will be held at Stephen Mack Middle School.

This year's event is set for Saturday, Dec. 9 from 9 a.m. until 4. Vendors are being sought to offer the best goods available.

Vendor set up is the Friday evening before the day of the event, Dec. 8 from 5-8 p.m.

The PTO is hoping to have a doughnut giveaway. Sponsorship opportunities are open to make this happen for children in the district.

**MORE HOLIDAY | Page 3**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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# What's happening in the Stateline this month

### 39th Annual Rockton Christmas Walk

FRI DEC 1 6:00 PM

*Downtown Rockton*

### Very Merry Pop Up Shop at Roscoe Middle School

SAT DEC 2 10:00 AM

*Roscoe Middle School*

### Live: Kristin Toon

SAT DEC 9 10:00 AM

*Best of Beloit, South Beloit*

*For more information about events or to register for them, scan to visit our community calendar at [roscoenews.com/calendar](http://roscoenews.com/calendar)*

### South Beloit Holiday Tree Lighting

FRI DEC 1 4:30 PM

*Nature at the Confluence, South Beloit*

### Y-i-Ride Spin-a-thon

SUN DEC 3 7:00 AM

*Stateline YMCA, Roscoe*

### Hometown Holiday Celebration in Roscoe

SAT DEC 9 3:00 PM

*Main Street Roscoe*



### Christmas Walk at Macktown

SAT DEC 2 10:00 AM

*Macktown Living History*

### Euchre at Roscoe Township Community Center

MON DEC 4 6:30 PM

*Roscoe Township Community Center*

### Live Music: Paul Hieser

SAT DEC 9 3:00 PM

*Best of Beloit, South Beloit*

### Career & Volunteer Open House

TUE DEC 19 2:00 PM

*Winnebago County Forest Preserves, Rockford*

### Rockton Christmas Walk Lighted Parade

SAT DEC 2 6:00 PM

*Main Street Rockton*

### 50 North, Senior Activity Event

TUE DEC 5 1:00 PM

*Roscoe Township Community Center*

### Christmas Sunday at Macktown

SUN DEC 10 2:00 PM

*Macktown Living History*

### Live Music: Espinosa & Coffey

FRI DEC 22 6:00 PM

*After the Vine, Rockton*

### Live Music: That Gurl

FRI DEC 1 7:00 PM

*Louie's Taphouse, Roscoe*

### Battle for Blood Drive

WED DEC 6 1:00 PM

*South Beloit Fire Station*

### Little Scientists: Trees

TUE DEC 12 10:00 AM

*Nature at the Confluence, South Beloit*

### South Beloit Teen Night

TUE DEC 26 5:30 PM

*Boys and Girls Club, South Beloit*

### Pancake Breakfast with Rockton Lions Club and Santa

SAT DEC 2 7:00 AM

*American Center, Rockton*

### Every Thursday Stewardship Day at Lost Flora Fen

THU DEC 7 9:00 AM

*Lost Flora Fen, Rockton*

### Peter Mayer's Stars and Promises Christmas Concert

SAT DEC 16 7:30 PM

*Hononegah PAC*

### Santa's Attic Half Price Sale

SAT DEC 2 9:00 AM

*Rockton Township Historical Society*

### The Holiday Market

DEC 8-10

*Synergy Collective, Roscoe*

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# Holiday / from Page 1

Taylor + Max invites children who are on the autism spectrum, or have any different neurological ability to visit with "Sensitive Santa" on Saturday, Dec.9. Young visitors are promised a special moment with Santa in a quiet environment.

This event is only for children with special needs. A sign up link will be posted on the Taylor and Max Facebook page. Sign up is required and space is limited. A guest therapist will be on site to introduce her services. Free digital photos of your child with Santa are available during the event. Call 815-957-0290 with any questions.

Hear sounds of the season on the Hononegah Community High School Performing Arts Center stage. A series of concerts start out on the right note with fifth grade students from Whitman Post Elementary School on Tuesday evening, Dec. 5 at 6:30 p.m.

On Wednesday evening WPES third graders take the stage. Thursday Dec. 7 Rockton Grade School second graders will perform holiday tunes. Bands and choirs from HCHS will hold their winter concert on Dec. 11, with a start time of 6:30.



At the 2022 Rockton Christmas Walk, the Sweet Adelines warm up before their performance at Rockton's Village Hall.

On Saturday, Dec. 16 Peter Mayer presents the Stars & Promises Christmas concert, to benefit GiGi's Playhouse and the Rockton Food Pantry. Tickets are required for this event.

Williams Tree Farm is open and ready for families or individuals to find that special Christmas tree or home decor, or gifts. They have several events planned to bring smiles to everyone such as making your own wreath or centerpiece on Dec. 5 at 6 p.m., or get creative at a crafty card party on Dec. 7 at 5:15 p.m.

Another place to find a real Christmas tree, wreaths and gifts is at an Old Fashion Christmas

Tree lot outside Schnucks, in support of Roscoe Boy Scout Troop 620. They are open during the weekends on December 1-3 and Dec. 8-10. Find that special piece on Friday from 4-7 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m.- 7 p.m., or on Sunday from 11 a.m. to 1 5 p.m.

The Church by the Side of the Road welcomes everyone to their annual Christmas Candlelight service on Sunday, Dec. 17. Experience the Christmas story as you join in singing Christmas carols, sung in between songs being performed by the talented Neala Jeansen and Chip Messiner. This special program begins at 5 p.m.

## About Us:

Rockton-Roscoe News is the first daily news outlet for Roscoe and Roscoe, Illinois since 1835. Now covering South Beloit as well, our free stories have been read more than 100,000 times a month, with more than 1,500 daily email subscribers. Our news is published online each day. We are supported by our advertisers and contributions from readers.

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Unlike a print newspaper, our website includes direct hyperlinks to resources and further information about our stories.



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# The story of Wimpy's Fund: giving back to the community

Wimpy's Fund began in memory of former Rockton police chief Everett Vaughn who served as chief from 1977-1981. He was given the nickname Wimpy based on the cartoon character in Popeye who walked the streets and carried a sandwich board.

As he was helping children cross the street, Vaughn would notice that some of the children didn't have gloves, hats or socks. He went one step further and took the mothers of those families shopping to buy clothing,

groceries and one gift for each child in need. His wife Betty provided Christmas dinner for the families; over time they added toys into the mix.

Vaughn passed away in 1997 and his friend Jack Stewart took action in carrying on his legacy. Other Lions Club members have teamed up over the years to make the Christmas season special by carrying on this long time tradition.

In any year volunteers from the public are also invited to help take the baskets to the auction site at American Center (American Legion), or can help with wrapping gifts. Another way that community members can take part is to adopt a family or to donate items or baskets for the auction, or to help on the day these gifts are delivered.

In addition to bidding on and collecting winning items monetary



donations can be given directly to First National Bank Macktown, or can be mailed to Rockton Lions Club, P.O. Box 90, Rockton, IL. 61072.

For more details on how to donate or to help in any way please call Terrie Garlow at 815-243-1053.

**December 9<sup>th</sup> 3-7pm**  
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**2023**

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**HOLIDAY**  
**COMMUNITY**  
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# Countdown to Christmas in Roscoe begins Thanksgiving Eve when Mr. Christmas lights up the night

By Jean Seegers



Following tradition, a spectacular light display kicks off the Christmas season in Roscoe each Thanksgiving evening, November 23, at precisely 5 p.m.

Luis Roldan, known as Mr. Christmas, has been lovingly creating a huge Christmas scene on his front yard at 5524 Hodges Way for several years. About eight years ago, Luis and his beloved wife Debbie started decorating for the holidays. Each year they did a little more.

In 2016, Debbie passed away. Before she died, she urged Luis to continue to create the holiday tradition. "She asked me to do it, for the children."

So, every year, with occasional help from his grandchildren, he keeps his pledge to Debbie.

"I am almost 83 now. It's getting a little more difficult to do it by myself."

Luis begins brainstorming and making plans for the next season right after the display comes down for the year.

Then there are repairs to be made and hundreds of lights to be checked. His goal is to gradually have LED lights on all the decorations.

Luis Roldan has added Santa Claus to his Christmas display at his Roscoe home. Each year he adds more lights, more characters and more Christmas trees.



The Christmas lights go on at 5524 Hodges Way on Thanksgiving evening at exactly 5:00 pm.



A mixture of whimsical characters, including Santa, his sleigh and eight reindeer, the nativity scene and angels cover the front and side lawn at his home.

It's become a Thanksgiving evening tradition to begin the Christmas season with a drive by the home of Mr. Christmas as the lights go up and holiday music inaugurates the holiday season.

Can't make the lighting event?

The display will be lighting up the night until early January 2024. Families are invited to drive by and see the display throughout the holidays. Every night until early January, cars will be driving slowly through the subdivision admiring the spectacular scene.



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# 2023 Rockton Christmas Walk: blending traditions with newer events

By Marianne Mueller 

Rockton's 39th annual Christmas Walk creates the spirit of the Christmas season with three days loaded with activities.

The 2023 Grand Marshall Sponsor is Benchmark Exteriors. Different sponsors are supporting various events.

Friday night opens with a tree lighting ceremony at Settlers Park, starting at 5:30 p.m. The Willowbrook Middle School choir will sing Christmas carols prior to the lighting of Rockton's newest Christmas tree at 6 p.m.

Take in all of the lighted displays in Settler's Park created by businesses and individuals at 150 E. Hawick St.

On Friday evening the very popular Dueling Pianos is returning to the American Center (American Legion), 221 W. Main St., for this holiday themed and Christmas carol filled event. Tickets are \$30 per person on EventBrite.

Rockton bars are ready for the sixth annual Ugly Sweater Pub Crawl. Catch up with friends as you visit local establishments on Friday night. Participants have a chance of winning one of seven prizes. Start at any location where you can pick up a stamp card. Have your card stamped at each location. Leave your card at your final destination.

Start your Saturday with a pancake breakfast from the Rockton Lions Club at the American Legion where Santa will be awaiting visits from little ones and young at heart. Your donation will benefit Lions Club charities.

Book lovers can find many genres of reads to find at Talcott Library's annual holiday book sale. Search for that perfect used



book on Friday anytime from 9 a.m. until 5:30, or on Saturday from 9 a.m. until 3 at 101 E. Main St.

Little ones can tell Santa Claus what they want for Christmas by writing a letter to him at financial advisor Brenda Bruegger's office from 12-4 p.m. on Saturday, at 167 Hawick Street.

Take in the sights of the season on a horse drawn wagon ride. You can board your free ride at Design Elements, 122 S. Prairie St. near West Hawick Street.

Young and young at heart can visit Santa at Rockton Village Hall from 12-4 p.m. on Saturday afternoon. Capture memories by having a photo taken with the jolliest elf of all.

One hour of holiday songs will come to life via the talents of the River City Sound Chorus Sweet Adelines on Saturday afternoon starting at 1 p.m., inside After the Vine, 163 E. Hawick.

A barbershop quartet is bringing a blend of harmony and melodies to town Saturday from 3-5 p.m., at Sugar Britches, 115 W. Main.

Rockton United Methodist Church is having a craft and a bake sale at 102 W. Chapel Street.

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rock Valley is hosting a day full of "Sparkles and Sweets" at 329 School St. with gently used Christmas items and bake sale goods. Bake sale items will have prices on them. Christmas goods are available for a donation.

Rockton Township Historical Society will have treasures to find at Santa's Attic Sale which will be open on Dec. 2 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at 529 Green Street.

Miss Andrea's Dance Factory invites the public to a bake sale on Saturday from 8 a.m. until noon at DeeDees Coffee and Decor, 101 W. Main St. Christmas carols will fill the room. Proceeds are earmarked to support MADF'S competition dance team.

Put on your imagination caps and wander to Jill Rae Finally Art, 210 W. Main Street. Create a Christmas character by painting a charming plaster figurine. Choose from a reindeer, snowman or a gnome.

At Macktown Living History on Saturday, the Mack house will be the location for making 19th century Christmas ornaments from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The evening lighted walk and festivities at 7 p.m. include a candle lit walk to the Mack house for a bonfire, hot cocoa, hot cider, cookies, and a carol sing.

Every year the tradition of Katie Cronin is remembered for her many years of leadership in decorating the Village Green Park with the Our Town Committee.

A touching tribute to Katie with the dedication and the lighting of Village Green Park, 100 E. Chapel St., will be held beginning at 4:30 on Saturday night. Sounds of the Whitman Post Elementary School Choir are a sure way to get everyone in the holiday spirit.

This year marks the 20th year since Katie's Cronin's death. In loving memory and in her honor, her family has sponsored luminaria. Two stations will be available to pick up free luminaria, one at the Village Hall and the other at the Walt Williamson Pool at Village Green Park. Everyone in Rockton is encouraged to make the season brighter by lining their sidewalks with luminaria.

As always the Lighted Christmas Parade promises the best of the season's color, splendor and magic. Sign up by Nov. 28 to create part of the magic by being in the parade, or come as a spectator to watch the parade roll down Main Street starting at 6 p.m. The parade begins at the intersection of Main Street and Center Street (near the American Legion Hall) and continues east along Main Street, concluding at Hononegah High School.

Following the parade is the Wimpy's Fund auction which is being held at the Rockton American Legion. Support this mission as the Rockton Lions Club gives back to area families in need with Christmas presents, clothing, and food.

Hot cocoa lovers are in for a real treat as the Hot Cocoa Crawl returns on Sunday, Dec. 3, 2023. Purchase tickets and a keepsake mug, complete with a nested mini spoon, for \$12 on the events page. Try different flavors from five downtown locations from 1-4 p.m. Stop back into the Village Hall to cast your vote for your favorite. Mugs can be picked up at the Rockton Village Hall, 110 E. Main Street.

New this year is a family friendly scavenger hunt. Pick up your hunting sheet at the Village Hall to complete the venture. Prizes will be given to the first 500 participants.

All weekend long, look for unique gift items when visiting local stores, or take a break at any number of food or beverage stops.

A full schedule of events and costs for specific activities can be found at [rocktonchristmaswalk.com](http://rocktonchristmaswalk.com), along with a full list of event sponsors.

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# It's Christmas time in the Village

By Jean Seegers 

The Village of Roscoe and elev815 and Main Street Square are getting ready to turn on the Christmas lights, open their doors and welcome the holiday season with the annual Hometown Holiday celebration, December, 9, 2023, from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Nearly every shop and business on Main Street in downtown Roscoe and Main Street Square will be offering holiday activities, Christmas treats, hot chocolate, and lots of Christmas music.

Lighted trees, created by elev815 members, fill the corner lot at Bridge Street and Main.

Food trucks and lighted floats will brighten the way along Main Street.

Main Street will be closed between Presley and Harrison Street during the event.

Stateline Mass Transit (SMTD) is providing free transportation from Bridge Street to Main Street Square throughout the evening.



Mrs. Claus reading stories to children at the 2022 Hometown Holidays in Roscoe

Caroling while riding is encouraged.

Stop by Roscoe Methodist Church to listen to holiday music and enjoy a free soup supper. The Alleluia Quartet will give a concert at .

The Hononegah Community High School Quartet will perform at 3:00 pm, followed by the Roscoe Middle School Choir at 4:00 pm, Stephen Mack Middle School Choir at 5:00 pm and the Willow

Brook Middle School Choir at 6:00 pm.

Hometown Holidays is offering something new this year in the RUMC Youth Worship room: Fake snowball fights all day

At 4:00 pm, a barbershop quartet will perform at the Blackhawk Barber Shop in Roscoe. The Barbershop Chorus will then move on to entertain at Main Street Square.

Main Street Square will be dressed up and ready for the holidays. The costumed Lamplight Carolers will be strolling the walkways and stopping in the stores and businesses.

The carolers will also entertain visitors on the porch of Roscoe Chiropractic Clinic.

Inside the State Farm building, Santa will be hanging out waiting to talk to all the kids. Wassail and hot chocolate around the fire pit will be available.

Meyers Canine Colony will offer marshmallow toasting opportunities and other treats

throughout the event.

Santa isn't leaving Mrs. Claus at home. She will be reading Christmas stories and helping kids write letters to Santa at Village Hall. Visitors can also build their own hot chocolate.

The Harlem Roscoe Fire Station will be filled with fun activities for kids throughout the event. Elev815 will be hosting games, prizes and activities. Popcorn and treats will be available.

Kids can get creative painting ornaments from Jill Rae Finally Art in the back room of the fire station.

Everyone will have the opportunity to pet the rein-goats (disguised as reindeer) grazing on the lawn in front of the building. A fainting goat will also be making an appearance.

At 6:30 pm, everyone is invited to gather around the Christmas tree to sing Christmas carols and witness the lighting of the Roscoe Village Christmas tree in front of the Jim Blevins State Farm Insurance.

## Rockton Lions make holiday season brighter through Wimpy's Fund

By Marianne Mueller 

Every year the Rockton Lions Club raises funds through the Wimpy's Fund auction during the Rockton Christmas Walk. Wimpy's Fund Chair Terrie Garlow, CO-chair Carol Wright and a team of volunteers are working hard to make this auction one to remember.

Over 100 families receive an extra dose of Christmas cheer in Rockton, Roscoe, Shirland, South Beloit and Harrison.

All names of families come from reaching out through the schools, and are referred by local school districts.

To assure a brighter Christmas season each receives food, toys and Christmas gifts from the Rockton Lions Club. Items that are received are based off of a list provided by the parents. "Every year we provide enough food to last a family at least a month or more, event chair Terrie Garlow said.

Help the Lions Club in these outreach efforts by taking a chance on winning useful and fun items, either online or in person. Baskets will be on display during different Christmas Walk events for viewing.

Online bidding will open on Friday afternoon - Dec. 1 and closes on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 10 p.m. Instructions for online bidding can be found on the Wimpy's Fund facebook page. The site that will be used to run the event is Silent Auction Pro; which is the same site that was used last year. Go to <https://www.silentacutionpro.com>. Place a bid on awesome goods donated by various individuals, organizations and businesses.

The live portion of the auction starts at the conclusion of the Rockton Christmas Walk Lighted Christmas parade. Raffles, wine pulls and other activities often add to the fun!

In person bidding will end around 10 p.m.

Wimpy's Fund's ongoing efforts ensure that local families have what they need to make the season merrier and brighter!

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