

What's Happening

...in Edwardsville

Edwardsville businesses, agencies look forward to busy holiday season

Edwardsville area businesses have a bona fide advocate in the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce, an association that has worked hard to gain national recognition in recent years.

The Chamber earned U.S. Chamber of Commerce Accreditation With 5-Star Distinction (the highest level of achievement) in 2019, placing the Ed/Glen Chamber in the top 1.7 percent of chambers of commerce nationwide.

“At the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce we continue to focus on three key areas of service for our member businesses – advocating for their future, promoting their expertise, and facilitating connections for their success,” said Desiree Bennyhoff, president and CEO. “While some of our methods have evolved, the mission has remained the same.”

The Chamber’s Membership Director Katie Haas said the association believes that a chamber membership should fit the needs of the business or organization.

“So, as the membership director, I spend quite a bit of time getting to know each owner to understand the level of support he or she needs. From there I’m able to provide a custom plan for utilizing the services that align with their current goals. This level of attention is something we are very proud of at the Ed/Glen Chamber.”

Haas said one of the organization’s most popular events returned

this year after a one-year hiatus.

“One of our signature events, the annual Halloween parade, returned to downtown Edwardsville this year and we were very pleased with the participation. Community support was strong, and many were encouraged to see the floats and bands marching down Main Street once again. Now, we look forward to shifting the focus back to our members and what they have going on this time of year.”

Merchants are already deep into the holiday season planning. Here are a few examples.

Colin Anderson, owner of **Trusty Chords Record Shop**, 1514 Troy Road, will again be participating in Record Store Day on Black Friday, which features extremely limited releases for the holiday shopping season.

“There are about 150 special releases spanning all genres,” he said.

Following that will be festivities and specials for Small Business Saturday.

“Trusty Chords has tons of great gift ideas including gift cards in any amount,” Anderson said.

Over at **True Value Rental**, 804 Southwest Place, Edwardsville, Alex St. Peters says he’s got a gift that is hard to wrap, but easy to give.

“Whether battery or fuel, STIHL makes a powerful gift. From chainsaws, blowers and trimmers to quality acces-



From left, Bob McClellan, Cathy Hamilton, Desiree Bennyhoff and Ben Taylor accepting a 5-Star accreditation designation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

sories and apparel there’s a STIHL gift for almost every home and budget,” he said.

“When you shop at a local business this holiday season, you also give back to your community in surprising ways,” he said.

A Holiday Open House is taking place at **Gingham Buffalo**, a unique home supply and interiors store at 500 N. Main St.

“It is Nov. 6 and 7,” said co-owner Chris Beard. “We also have a store-wide sale of 20 percent off for Back Friday and giveaways on Small Business Saturday. We have snacks and refreshments on all of those days.”

Meanwhile, **A Wildflower Shop** will be holding a holiday open house Nov. 13. The owners say they have transformed the location “to a winter wonderland. There will be door prizes, special offers, goodie bags and hopefully a visit from Santa himself.” The store is located at 2131 South State Route 157.

Much activity is also in the offing at the **Edwardsville Children’s Museum**, 722 Holyoake Road.

One big event is called the Arctic Express, which will be held from noon to 4 p.m. Dec. 5 at the museum and the nearby Nickel Plate Station.

“This event features an impressive display of arctic-themed recycled art sculptures created by local students and civic groups, train rides for kids, family crafts, and of course – Santa!” spokeswoman Kate Al-laria said. Professional photos with Santa are available with pre-booking to ensure proper social distancing. Event tickets are \$5 per person (2 and under are free). Participants may book photos and purchase tickets on the Children’s Museum website.

The event will feature an Arctic Walk, an arctic-themed recycled art

contest, with submissions from local middle school groups and other community groups, including their research and discoveries about how climate change is affecting their subject.

The museum is partnering with the Edwardsville Arts Center, Republic Services, and Cardinal Buick to bring the event to the community.

The Artic Express day will also feature train rides; hot cocoa and cookies; a craft table where kids can make food for Santa’s reindeer; and a professional chainsaw artist carving a tree in the Discovery Garden.

Also making plans during the holiday — and for a need that continues all year long — is the **Glen-Ed Pantry**, 125 Fifth Ave.

“We have a number of upcoming programs we are asking the community to support us in,” said Director of Development Jane Balsters Ahasay.

- November 20 is the annual Scouting For Food and Glen-Ed Pantry Food and Fund Drive. Local Scouts will be picking up food items from community doorsteps. The pantry will also be accepting food and funds at the pantry from 10 am to 2 pm.

- November and December, Glen-Ed Pantry will be providing Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets to qualifying families. The pantry will be accepting food and monetary donations to support the baskets throughout the months of November and December.

- Christmas Shopping for Children. The pantry is accepting donations of new toys, gift cards and money to purchase additional items through Dec. 15.

For more information, visit www.glenedpantry.org

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