

# News Release

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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## Downtown Pensacola lights up the holiday season with events, trolley tours and four hundred thousand twinkling lights beginning Nov. 25

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**PENSACOLA, Fla. (Nov. 8, 2016)** – For more than sixty enchanting nights beginning Nov. 25, visitors to downtown Pensacola will experience music, shopping, food, art and nightlife under a canopy of four hundred thousand white lights illuminating historic buildings, parks, shops, galleries and outdoor spaces. They can navigate the eclectic district that’s anchored by Palafox Street—named one of America’s “Ten Great Streets”—on foot or by Segway®, horse and carriage, pedi-cab or a free Downtown Trolley.

Immediately following the Winterfest Elf Parade on Black Friday, Nov. 25, a holiday lighting ceremony will launch the inaugural **First City Lights Festival**, a diverse, season-long lineup of downtown holiday events as traditional as “The Nutcracker” and as modern as Pop-Up Opera. Wandering along Palafox throughout the holidays, downtown visitors may chance upon live street performances, Christmas caroling in the streets, Santa posing for photos and Winterfest Trolley Tours.

Pensacola’s Downtown Improvement Board (DIB) conceived the idea of coordinating, supporting and branding all of the district’s diverse holiday events synchronously this year. “Downtown Pensacola provides an unforgettable holiday experience for families,” said Curt Morse, DIB’s executive director. “Aside from the usual draws of fantastic shopping, museums and dining, the holidays downtown also mean live outdoor theater, musical performances and the unique setting created each evening when the lights come on. First City Lights Festival brings all of these experiences together into one extraordinary, months-long event.”

The official lighting ceremony on Nov. 25 comes on the heels the Winterfest Elf Parade, an annual procession featuring characters from the Peanuts Gang, the Island of Misfit Toys and other Christmas classics that makes its way from the T.T. Wentworth Museum to the steps of the Artel Gallery amidst a backdrop of faux snow and “reindeer” games.

*Augustus Maywho*, the mythical mayor of Whoville, will flip the switch to light up downtown and officially launch the holiday season at approximately 5:15 pm.

Winterfest’s wide range of family activities and entertainment will continue through Dec. 24. The festival, now in its 12th year, takes visitors on a two-mile trolley tour through downtown’s lighted streets, stopping at various points along the way for live street performances featuring carolers, meticulously detailed sets and a full cast of Christmas characters.

**Want to Go?**

What: Downtown Holiday Lighting Ceremony

When: Friday, Nov. 25, 2015 immediately following the Elf Parade (approx. 5:15pm)

Where: Artel Gallery, County Courthouse, Corner of Palafox and Government

### **More Holiday Events in Downtown Pensacola:**

- Historic Pensacola Victorian Holiday Traditions Tour – Nov. 15-Dec. 23 in Historic Pensacola
- Choral Society of Pensacola Live – Dec. 01 at Artel Gallery
- Deck the Halls: The Pensacola Opera Carolers at Jackson's on Dec. 03
- Handel's Messiah, Choral Society of Pensacola at the Saenger Theatre on Dec. 03
- Historic Holiday Gala – Dec. 03 in Historic Pensacola
- White Christmas Concert – Dec. 04 at First United Methodist Church
- "A Charlie Brown Christmas" – Dec. 09-18 at Pensacola Little Theatre
- "Christmas on the Coast," Pensacola Children's Chorus – Dec. 10-11 at Saenger Theatre
- Immanuel Lutheran Carolers – Dec. 15 at Artel Gallery
- Ballet Pensacola presents "The Nutcracker" – Dec. 16-18 at Saenger Theatre
- "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" – Dec. 19 at Saenger Theatre
- Christmas Caroling – Dec. 21 at First United Methodist Church
- Christmas Eve service – Dec. 24 at Rex Theatre

For a full list of downtown Pensacola holiday events and information, visit [www.downtownpensacola.com](http://www.downtownpensacola.com) and [www.pensacolawinterfest.org](http://www.pensacolawinterfest.org).

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