

Delray party to start

Santa Claus arrives Dec. 3 to herald a month of festivity and light the city's giant tree

BY MARISA GOTTESMAN
Staff writer

Santa has traded in his helicopter for a BMW convertible as his means of transportation to get to Delray Beach's annual tree-lighting this year.

Holiday festivities will begin at 5 p.m. Dec. 3 when Santa cruises into town in his new whip to light the 100-foot Christmas tree at 7:15 p.m.

The tree stands at Delray's Center for the Arts at Old School Square at 51 N. Swinton Ave. The tree lighting launches the month-long celebration of the holiday season that is themed "Home for the Holidays."

Associate Director of the Delray Marketing Cooperative Stephen Chrisanthus said the theme is all about highlighting the small-town feel that makes Delray special,

especially during the holiday season.

"We are bringing back all the important things for the holidays, caroling, holiday activities and community," he said.

The cooperative is in charge of building the 100-foot tree with its 15,000 LED lights and 30,000 ornaments adorned on 3,000 tree branches with help from volunteers. This year, the top of the star will show Delray's solidarity with France by displaying the colors of the French flag.

The marketing group is also in charge of making sure Santa takes a break from toymaking in the North Pole to visit Delray as well as other city holiday festivities.

This season, Chrisanthus said the outdoor ice skating rink is double the size, the holiday train ride has more tracks and there is a miniature golf course of six holes. Also new is a holiday market where folks can purchase holiday gifts from around the world.

All activities are located on the grounds of Old School Square until Jan. 1.

For those who celebrate Hanukkah, the

city will hold a Menorah lighting at sundown on Dec. 6 at Old School Square.

There will be other holiday activities throughout town as well. Delray Yacht Cruises is hosting four "Cookie Cruise with Santa" trips down the Intracoastal on Dec. 5, 12, 19 and 20. Cruises leave at 10 a.m. and reservations for the \$20 trip are required.

Also by the water, the 45th Annual Holiday Boat Parade will hit the city's Intracoastal Waterway around 5:30 p.m. Dec. 11.

By land, the city will host its Holiday Parade at 6 p.m. Dec. 12 down Atlantic Avenue. After the parade, Spady Museum will provide musical entertainment.

The holiday events will end with the city's annual First Night celebration from 5 p.m. to midnight on Dec. 31. Activities take place at the Tennis Center and Old School Square. Tickets are on sale for \$10 until the event when it costs \$15 to enter.

For a complete list of Delray holiday activities, visit 100ftchristmastree.com

mgottesman@sunsentinel.com

Winter comes to Boca



CARLINE JEAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Alexandra Lewis, 3, of Boca Raton, makes her way to the top of the snow pile during Boca Raton's holiday tree-lighting event at Mizner Park Amphitheater in Boca Raton on Wednesday night. In addition to the tree lighting, the event featured a stage show, rides, snow carolers and a visit from Santa Claus.

Lawyer chuckles his way into the Thanksgiving Day Parade

BY RAFAEL OLMEDA
Staff writer

Quick, how do you tell the difference between a lawyer and a clown?

According to Chuck Tatelbaum, who is both, the answer is easy.

People are usually happy to see a clown. Tatelbaum, or "Chuckles" to those who are happy to see him, will be marching along with a slew of other face-painted entertainers in Thursday's signature Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

It's a volunteer job he's held for the past five years.

"From the time I was a kid, I've always loved clowns because they make people happy," said Tatelbaum, 72, a director in the Tripp Scott Law Firm in Fort Lauderdale. "As a

"From the time I was a kid, I've always loved clowns because they make people happy. As a bankruptcy lawyer, I rarely deal with happy people."

Chuck Tatelbaum, attorney

bankruptcy lawyer, I rarely deal with happy people."

Tatelbaum has counted Macy's among his clients for 20 years, and during a casual conversation with the attorney for the parade several years ago, he mentioned his desire to make people smile.

"This sounds silly," Tatelbaum recalls saying to his colleague, "but I've always wanted to be a clown in the parade."

As it happens, the attorney was a parade

clown, or "clownsel," as Tatelbaum put it.

What followed was a day of training in the Big Apple Circus' "Clown College," followed by a final exam. Would-be clowns have to demonstrate smiles, enthusiasm and animal noises.

Practicing for the parade takes a lot of exercise. Clowns don't just walk, he said. They wave. They cheer. They yell "Happy Thanksgiving" for hours. And they pay special attention to children along the route, especially those in wheelchairs.

"Our job is to entertain 3.5 million people along the parade route," he said.

Television exposure is unlikely, but just in case: Chuckles and the rest of the clowns will be walking ahead of the Tom Turkey float, the first in the parade. The parade airs live from 9 a.m. to noon on NBC and will be re-broadcast from 2 to 5 p.m.

rolmeda@tribpub.com, 954-356-4457, Twitter @SSCourts and @rolmeda

Holiday schedule

Thursday

Government/schools

■ Federal, state, county and municipal offices will be closed. Public schools, colleges and universities will be closed.

Services

■ Banks, stock market and post offices will be closed. Express Mail will be delivered.

■ There will be no garbage pickup and no make-up day in the county; garbage will be picked up on the next scheduled day, except in the city of Boynton Beach, where Thursday pickup will be made Friday and Friday pickup will be made Saturday. The city of Boca Raton garbage pickup for today was made yesterday.

Shopping

■ Publix is closed
■ Winn-Dixie is open until 4 p.m.
■ Boynton Beach Mall: 6 p.m.-1 a.m.
■ Gardens Mall: Closed.
■ Town Center Mall: 6 p.m.-1 a.m.
■ Mall at Wellington Green: 6 p.m.-midnight

Entertainment

■ Palm Beach County public libraries and municipal libraries will be closed.
■ County parks will be open.

Transportation

■ Tri-Rail will run on a Sunday schedule today and a regular schedule on Friday.
■ Palm Tran will not run today and will run on a regular schedule on Friday.

Friday

Government/schools

■ Federal offices will be open.
■ State, county and municipal offices will be closed.
■ Public schools, Palm Beach State College, Florida Atlantic University and Lynn University will be closed.

Services

■ Open: Banks, stock market, post offices.
■ Boynton Beach garbage pickup for yesterday will be made today.

Shopping

■ Open: Malls, supermarkets.
Mall hours:
■ Boynton Beach Mall, 6 a.m.-10 p.m.
■ The Gardens Mall, 8 a.m.-10 p.m.
■ Town Center Mall, 6 a.m.-10 p.m.
■ Mall at Wellington Green, 6 a.m.-9 p.m.

Entertainment

■ The county library system will be closed.
■ Boca Raton city libraries will be open.

Transportation

■ Tri-Rail and Palm Tran will run on a regular schedule.

Strip clubs must follow city's rules, judge says

BY LARRY BARSZEWSKI
Staff writer

A federal judge says dancers at the Pure Platinum strip club in Oakland Park have to partially cover up and stop performing lap dances, while the club must stop serving alcohol to comply with the city's adult entertainment regulations.

The same rules also apply to the Solid Gold strip club, where dancers had already donned bikinis while the club challenged the city in court.

Both Federal Highway clubs have sought judicial protection from the rules while they wage a First-Amendment case in court, claiming erotic, nude dancing as a constitutional right.

"The city would expect both establishments to comply with the order of the court and therefore adhere to the city's regulations," City Attorney D.J. Doody said.

Luke Lirot, an attorney representing the clubs, said he will file an appeal — possibly as early as Friday — and again seek to stay the city's enforcement pending the appeal.

Club officials have said it will kill their business if alcohol cannot be served alongside nude or semi-nude performances, which the city's law does not allow, because customers will go elsewhere. Lirot is looking for options if the court's opinion doesn't change.

"I am researching some issues, but I believe there are more theatrically acceptable options than bathing suits that will be in compliance with the legislation and still not be deemed to be 'semi-nude,' Lirot said. That would allow alcohol to continue to be served with the performances, he said.

Pure Platinum and Solid Gold had been exempted from following the city's regulations on sexually oriented businesses because of agreements they signed in 2004 with the city. But those agreements expired Nov. 2 and city officials put the clubs on notice that they would have to follow the city's rules.

Violations would be punishable by up to a \$500 fine and 60 days in jail, with each day a club is in violation considered a separate offense. The rules allow only semi-nude dancing, prohibit contact between customers and performers and don't allow alcohol to be served.

U.S. District Judge James Cohn ruled Wednesday that the city's ban on total nudity was "content-neutral" and not specifically targeting exotic dancers. He also said the city had demonstrated sufficiently that sexually oriented businesses serving alcohol have "negative secondary effects."

Drug abuse summit to discuss mental health issues

BY MARISA GOTTESMAN
Staff writer

The Palm Beach County Drug Abuse Summit will convene for its third annual discussion on the current state of mental health and drug abuse on Tuesday.

This year, the public discussion is titled, "Society's Stigma: Addiction & Mental Illness." The half-day meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and at Jupiter's Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience, One Max Planck Way.

The first topic is called "Overcoming the Stigma: Has Progress Been Made?" The second discussion is called "Helping or Hurting? The role of the media, law enforcement, government, health care and the education system on addiction and mental illness." The final panel will go over "Where do we go from here?" with input from government, law enforcement and community outreach initiatives.

The summit is free, but reservations are required. A light, complimentary breakfast will be served.

Details: 561-841-1212 or hanleycenterfoundation.org/summit.

Wilton Manors establishing own rules for marijuana offenses

BY LARRY BARSZEWSKI
Staff writer

WILTON MANORS — City officials don't think people caught with small amounts of marijuana should end up with a criminal record, but they've decided to create their own rules rather than be part of a Broward County law passed this month.

The city's rules will be similar to the county's except that violators will be guilty of a city code violation and not a county infraction. That will let the city keep the money from any tickets issued — \$100 for a first offense, \$250 for a second and \$500 for a third — instead of it going into the county's coffers.

Any appeals would be handled by a special magistrate for the city.

City commissioners gave preliminary approval to the proposal Tuesday, which gives police the discretion of issuing civil citations to individuals possessing 20 grams of marijuana or less for recreational uses. This would allow violators to keep their criminal records blemish-free unless they are caught a fourth time.

"The whole idea of this was not to penalize people for something that is considered fairly minor," Commissioner Tom

Green said.

The city's law would not give violators the option of performing community service work instead of paying a fine, something that is available under the county's law. But like the county's, it would require a person with a third citation to undergo a substance abuse assessment and participate in any treatment program recommended by the assessment.

The proposed law would not apply to people openly smoking marijuana in public or to people selling or distributing it. They will still be charged criminally.

Wilton Manors police made 84 marijuana arrests in 2013, 122 in 2014 and the department projects 124 arrests this year. Police estimated the city law would bring in about \$16,500 in annual revenues.

Commissioner Justin Flippen wanted to have substance abuse assessments required for those receiving a first-time citation, to better catch addiction problems early.

"By your third offense under this program, habits are pretty much set," Flippen said.

But other commissioners disagreed, saying that policy would add additional costs for the fluke violator and defeat the purpose of issuing civil citations.