

100 Miles of Lights

Hampton ★ Newport News ★
Norfolk ★ Portsmouth ★ Richmond ★ Williamsburg ★ Virginia Beach

Calendar of Events November 2009 to January 2010 (★★ = Multiple Month Event)

November

★★ November 1 – December 23

Newport News

Wild Gifts for the Holidays, Virginia Living Museum

Just perfect for the holidays, this special sale includes a collection of unusual and affordable nature-related items for all ages, including eco-friendly clothing, plush toys, and stationery. Favorites will include easy reader books, learning games, socks & hoodies, cuddly stuffed animals, home decor and hand-made jewelry - all themed to reflect Virginia's native wildlife. Many items are unique, being created especially for the Museum. Monday to Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, Noon to 5 p.m. Free admission to sale. For more information, call 757-595-1900 or go online at www.thevlm.org

★★ November 7 – January 3, 2010

Newport News

Artful Giving, Peninsula Fine Arts Center

Experience *Artful Giving* at the Peninsula Fine Arts Center. For the season, Pfac's Gallery Shop expands to feature decorations, accessories and gift items from around the corner and around the world. For this year's festivities, Jo Louise has chosen holiday décor and party items found nowhere else, along with unique artworks and unusual craft items both practical and whimsical. Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Wednesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-596-8175 or go online at www.pfac.org.

★★ November 7 – January 3, 2010

Newport News

Season's Greetings: Holiday Scenes from the Noland Company Collection, Peninsula Fine Arts Center

This festive exhibition features dozens of nostalgic artworks featuring historic buildings from around the country decked out in their holiday finery. Each year the Noland Company, headquartered in Newport News, Va., commissioned artists to create an original painting for their company holiday cards. Most scenes feature joyous revelers in period costume enjoying the spirit of the season. Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Wednesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-596-8175 or go online at www.pfac.org.

November 19

Richmond

2nd Annual Deck the Halls Silent Auction, Maymont

Wind your way through a silent auction of beautifully decorated wreaths, tabletop arrangements and other seasonal items created by local floral designers, garden clubs and Maymont volunteers. Tea and light refreshments. Design demonstration. 10 a.m. to noon. Admission. For more information call, 804-358-7166 or go online at www.maymont.org.

**** November 20 – December 31**

Portsmouth

Coleman's Winter Wonderland in Olde Towne Portsmouth, Historic District

For 39 consecutive years, a Portsmouth garden center called "Coleman Nursery" dazzled hundreds of thousands of families with its Winter Wonderland holiday scenes of animated figures. It became a tradition for parents to bring their children – and those children to later bring their offspring – to see their favorite characters, which ranged from the "Snow Babies" with their long, curly eyelashes to a seesaw-riding skunk whose partner was a raccoon with a clothespin clipped to his nose! The nursery closed in early 2004 after 60 years in business; however, because the "Winter Wonderland" collection was so near and dear to the hearts of so many people in Hampton Roads and beyond, the Portsmouth Museums purchased the collection and now displays it in the Courthouse Galleries. For more information, call 757-393-8543 or go online at www.courthousegalleries.com.

**** November 20 – January 3, 2010**

Virginia Beach

McDonald's Holiday Lights at the Beach, Boardwalk

Festive fish, jumping dolphins, frolicking porpoises – all in bright, colored lights against the clear night-time sky, are the stars of McDonald's Holiday Lights at the Beach, a nautical and holiday-themed light display at the Virginia Beach oceanfront! They are joined by Santa, elves and a 40-foot tall Christmas tree erected on the beach and in the beautiful parks along the boardwalk. For over 30 blocks, this "Fanta-Sea" of lights is sure to dazzle and amaze holiday travelers visiting the Beach. New displays are added each year so it's never the same show twice. A free CD of holiday music is provided to each vehicle entering the lights. Sunday to Thursday, 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday to Saturday, 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-491-7866 or go online at www.beachstreetusa.com.

November 20

Portsmouth

Olde Towne Arts & Antiques 13th Annual Open House, Olde Towne

Start your holiday season with some old-fashioned sparkle! Enjoy holiday-themed window painting by Portsmouth student artists; glean a bit of history with Colonel Crawford leading tours of the 12 historic squares of High Street; stroll to music and festivities on the streets and explore many of the fine antique shops, world class art galleries and unique specialty stores along the High Street corridor. Many will highlight yuletide displays from the Coleman's Winter Wonderland Collection in their windows, provide music and refreshments and, of course, holiday gift and decorating ideas. 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, call 757-405-3500 or go online at www.oldetowneportsmouth.com.

November 21

Hampton

Coliseum Central Holiday Parade, Coliseum Central District

Enjoy the holiday season during this much-anticipated seasonal day-time parade. Featuring helium balloons, floats, clowns, marching bands and the world's "youngest" elf of all: Santa! The parade will be followed by pictures with Santa at the new Peninsula Towne Center and free horse and sleigh rides for all. 9 a.m. For more information, call 757-826-6351 or go online at www.coliseumcentral.com.

November 21

Norfolk

Grand Illumination Parade, Downtown Norfolk and Olde Town Portsmouth

Festivities begin with the Grand Illumination of the Downtown Norfolk and Olde Towne Portsmouth skylines, when 100,000 voices along the Grand Illumination Parade Route will take part in a community countdown. The skylines stretch nearly 20 miles to light up our favorite holidays – Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and New Year’s Eve. The illumination signals the start of the parade filled with festive and lighted floats, marching bands, giant balloons, decorated vehicles, dancers and, of course, Santa Claus. Pre-parade entertainment begins at 5 p.m., followed by the Grand Illumination at 7 p.m. The parade begins at Waterside Drive and St. Paul’s Boulevard immediately after. Free. For more information, call 757-623-1757 or go online to www.downtownnorfolk.org.

November 21 and 28

Charles City County

James River Plantations’ Thanksgiving Progressive Candlelight Tour, Ashland, Duck Church, Ladysmith and Piney Grove (Midway between Richmond and Williamsburg)

Explore the history of America’s Thanksgiving tradition in James River Plantation Country just minutes from the site of America’s first official celebration. Visit the historic buildings of Piney Grove at Southall’s Plantation (1790), Ashland (1835), Ladysmith (1857), Dower Quarter (1830) and Duck Church (1917) with “Tours-By-The-Owner.” 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-829-2196 or go online at www.pineygrove.com.

★★ November 21 – January 6, 2010

Richmond

Maymont Mansion Holiday Tours, Maymont

Celebrate a very special Christmas at Maymont, decorated in authentic Victorian holiday splendor. Lavish tree trimmings, the opulent dining room and other spectacular decor bring the wonders of an upper-class Victorian Christmas to life. Meanwhile, in the basement of the mansion, the kitchen is a hub for holiday dinner preparations. Enjoy a tour with out-of-town guests or make it your own annual tradition. Tours available every half-hour. Noon to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information call, 804-358-7166 or go online at www.maymont.org.

★★ November 21 – January 18, 2010

Norfolk

MacArthur On Ice, MacArthur Center

There’s only one place to skate outdoors during the holidays. At MacArthur Center, where you’ll always find something special. Bring the family, bring your friends and enjoy the best skating extravaganza Norfolk’s ever seen. With public skating, figure skating exhibitions, lessons, skating with the Norfolk Admirals and more, MacArthur Center is the place to be this holiday season. 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-622-0280.

★★ November 25 – December 31

Newport News

Laser Holidays, Virginia Living Museum

Experience a mix of classic holiday music and dazzling laser lights in a totally new way – all around you. The whole family can become immersed in holiday fun. Wednesday to Friday 1:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 11:30 a.m. Additional 11:30 a.m. show on December 21 – 23, 26 and 28 – 31 and 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. show on November 28, December 19 and December 26. Admission. For more information, call 757-595-1900 or go online at www.thevlm.org.

**** November 25 – December 31**

Newport News

Star of Wonder: The Mystery of the Christmas Star Holiday Planetarium Show, Virginia Living Museum

Experience the journey of the Magi from a new perspective - all around you! Become immersed in the majesty and mystery of the scientific puzzle of the identity of the Star of Bethlehem. The timeless and touching holiday classic enters a new era with its 45th consecutive season. November 25 – December 31; Wednesday to Friday 2:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Additional 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. shows on December 21 – 23, 26 – 31. Admission. For more information, call 757-595-1900 or go online at www.thevlm.org.

November 26 – 28

Williamsburg and Yorktown

Foods & Feasts of Colonial Virginia, Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Victory Center

Explore the 17th- and 18th-century culinary practices of Virginia during this three-day event beginning on Thanksgiving Day. At Jamestown Settlement, learn how food was gathered, preserved and prepared on land and at sea by Virginia's English colonists and Powhatan Indians. At Yorktown Victory Center, learn about typical soldiers' fare during the American Revolution and trace the bounty of a 1780s farm from field to kitchen. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-253-4838 or go online at www.historyisfun.org.

**** November 26 – January 1, 2010**

Newport News

Celebration in Lights, Newport News Park

Light up your holidays with the award-winning Celebration in Lights, a two-mile drive-through of spectacular animated scenes set in Newport News Park. Over 700,000 lights illuminate the beauty of Newport News Park's forests, fields, and ponds in this, Virginia's longest running drive-through light event. View multi-colored snowflakes, leaping reindeer, whimsical toys and forest animals, elegant swans and scenes from Virginia's past portrayed in a kaleidoscope of dazzling color. Over 200 displays, including 70 animated displays, are spread throughout a dozen theme areas, including "Winter Wonderland," "Forest Friends," "Battle of the Ironclads," "Santa's Enchanted Kingdom" and "Old Man Winter." Daily, 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission per bus or car. For more information, call 757-926-1400 or go online at www.nnparks.com.

**** November 26 – January 3, 2010**

Norfolk

Garden of Lights, Norfolk Botanical Garden

Whether it's your first visit or a family tradition, make memories you'll treasure forever on our two-mile driving tour through a million twinkling lights. This year, enjoy the new "Garden by the Sea" underwater adventure. Travel through a watery scene of lights with a mermaid and her friends as they celebrate Norfolk's Year of the Mermaid. 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission. For additional information, call 757-441-5830 or go online at www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org.

**** November 26 – March 8, 2010**

Hampton

Downtown Hampton Central on Ice!, Virginia Air & Space Center

The Peninsula's only outdoor, holiday ice skating rink! Experience Downtown Hampton's Rockefeller Center when you step into a winter wonderland ice skating rink at the Virginia Air & Space Center. Skate rentals available. Admission. For more information, call 757-727-0900 or go to www.vasc.org.

November 27

Richmond

The Day After Thanksgiving Art Affair 2009, Art Works

On “Black Friday,” avoid the mall and come to Art Works for the The Day After Thanksgiving Art Affair. We'll have shopping, music, refreshments inside and outside, plus the Umbrella Farmer's Market. In addition to the 75 artist studios and 5 galleries, the 50 and Below Gallery, where everything is \$50 or less, returns this year. You are sure to find something exciting, that perfect gift you've been looking for. 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Free; items for sale. For more information call, 804-291-1400 or go online at www.artworksrichmond.com.

November 27 – 29

Virginia Beach

Christmas Market, Virginia Beach Convention Center

The Virginia Beach Christmas Market, at the Virginia Beach Convention Center, features more than 350 fine artisans and crafters from more than 20 states. Readers of *Sunshine Artist Magazine* voted this popular event as one of the best 100 arts and crafts shows in the USA. Featured artisans will offer fine arts, pottery, jewelry, stained glass, wood, toys, photography, fiber arts and thousands of Christmas collectibles. Discover unique one-of-kind Christmas gifts, personalized stocking stuffers, and stunning floral holiday centerpieces. Admission. For more information, call 757-491-7866 or go online at www.emgshows.com.

**** November 27 – 29 and December 4 – 6, 11 – 13, 18 – 24 and 26 – 27**

Williamsburg

Christmas Town at Busch Gardens, Busch Gardens

On every street corner you'll hear the sounds of the season. From traditional Christmas favorites in Banbury Cross, England, to country-style classics in New France and Celtic sounds in the streets of Killarney, Ireland, this is the music you love. And it's a place where you can also see new holiday-themed shows and ride some of your favorite rides. 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 800-343-7946 or go online at www.christmastown.com.

**** November 27 – December 31**

Virginia Beach

Winter Wonderland at Hunt Club Farm, Hunt Club Farm

Come experience our new Winter Wonderland Christmas Barn decorated as “A Magical Forest Toyland” of animals and elves preparing for the holidays! Walk through thousands of sparkling lights and watch a hundred animations come to life. Visitors will be delighted by Hunt Club Farm's Sparkling Petting Farm Light Displays and Children's Maze, Live animal nativity, and huge old-fashioned bonfire for roasting marshmallows. This is where you can make memories to last a lifetime, and become a family tradition. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-427-9520 or go online at www.huntclubfarm.com.

**** November 27 – January 3, 2010**

Williamsburg

Colonial Williamsburg's Holiday Season, Colonial Williamsburg

Nothing quite compares to spending the Christmas season in Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Area. Special programs, dining, entertainment, hotel packages, events for children and more are waiting to enchant guests who come to enjoy a magical season they'll not soon forget. Admission. For more information, call 800-447-8679 or go online at www.history.org.

**** November 27 – January 11, 2010**

Richmond

GardenFest of Lights, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

A holiday tradition! The show features more than a half million lights arranged in botanical themes throughout the 25-acre garden. With hundreds of trees wrapped in lights and winding pathways full of surprises, *GardenFest of Lights* is a magical experience for all ages. Holiday dinners are available with reservations. 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-262-9887 or go online at www.lewisginter.org.

November 28

Newport News

Holiday Tree Lighting, Port Warwick

Enjoy many family activities planned throughout the day. Santa will visit with children and Mrs. Claus will stop by to tell stories. Children can enjoy decorating holiday cookies and participating in kids' karaoke. There will be wandering carolers, a hand-bell choir and much more to make your shopping even more enjoyable! 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-771-9343 or go online at www.portwarwick.com.

**** November 28 and December 19**

Virginia Beach

Sailing with Santa, Virginia Aquarium

Take a 45-minute cruise on Owls Creek with Santa and his crew. Enjoy refreshments, games and activities while Santa greets his guests for a unique photo opportunity. 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-385-3474 or go online at www.virginiaaquarium.com.

**** November 28 – 29 and December 5 – 6, 12 – 13 and 19 – 20**

Virginia Beach

SCUBA Santa, Virginia Aquarium

Santa descends into the depths of the Chesapeake Bay Aquarium to feed the fishes! 11 a.m. to noon. Admission. For more information, call 757-385-3474 or go online at www.virginiaaquarium.com.

November 29

Virginia Beach

Founders Illumination, The Founders Inn and Spa

The annual Christmas family tradition continues! Throughout the day, enjoy the toy factory, face painting, magicians, Mandy Panda, Spectrum Puppets, the Doorway Singers, strolling entertainment and area musicians and choirs singing by our 35-foot Christmas tree. The lighting ceremony begins at 6pm; with the flip of a switch The Founders Inn and Spa turns into a Christmas wonderland. Noon to 9 p.m. For more information, call 757-368-5749 or go online at www.foundersinn.com.

November 29

Newport News

Wrathing of the Lions, The Mariners' Museum

Join the Bronze Door Society at the historic Hampton Roads landmark, the Lion's Bridge, as they launch the holiday season with the ceremonial wreathing of Anna Hyatt Huntington's signature lion sculptures. This traditional donning of all four of the life-sized lions with giant holiday wreaths will delight young and old alike! Along with festive food and drinks, this event will sparkle with family-filled games and activities. One of a series of special events celebrating the 75th Anniversary of The Mariners' Museum. 3 p.m. Free; refreshments for sale. For more information, call 757-591-7705 or go online at www.MarinersMuseum.org.

November 29 – 30

Newport News

Johnny Mathis Christmas, Ferguson Center for the Arts

One of North America's most popular entertainers, the legendary Johnny Mathis hits the stage to perform favorite holiday classics in his trademark velvety voice. Known for his smooth vocal skills and celebrated ballads, his hit songs include "Chances Are," "The Twelfth of Never," "Wild Is The Wind," "Come to Me" and "Misty." Mathis has sold more than 350 million records and is one of only five recording artists to have Top 40 hits spanning each decade since 1955. He has also appeared at numerous U.S. Presidential State Dinners and Royal Command Performances. 7: 30 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-594-8752 or go online at www.fergusoncenter.org.

**** November 29 and December 6, 13 and 20**

Virginia Beach

Sundays with Santa, Virginia Aquarium

Join Santa and his elves for activities and education programs from noon to 3 p.m. in the Marsh Pavilion. Noon to 3 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-385-3474 or go online at www.virginiaaquarium.com.

**** November 30 – December 22**

Norfolk

Polar Express Trains, Norfolk Botanical Garden

Bring your family to ride the Polar Express! Make a keepsake bell, sip cocoa and eat cookies while listening to the story, The Polar Express. Finish the evening with a tram ride through the Garden of Lights. This event has become a tradition for many families. Train rides at 5 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., Sundays through Thursdays. Admission. For additional information, call 757-441-5830 or go online at www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org.

December

December 1 – 22

Norfolk

Polar Express Trains, Norfolk Botanical Garden

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December 1 – 31

Portsmouth

Coleman's Winter Wonderland in Olde Towne Portsmouth, Historic District

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December 1 – 31

Charles City County

***James River Plantations' Christmas in Plantation Country, Various locations* (Midway between Richmond and Williamsburg)**

Historic landmark plantations and regional dining establishments, from Richmond to Newport News along the James River, offer festive holiday activities to suit every taste! See the variety of tours, candlelight dinners and vacation packages, as well as regular house and grounds tours. Visit one or all of the historic sites and regional dining establishments: Appomattox Manor, Belle Air Plantation, Chippokes, Edgewood Plantation, Endview, Flowerdew Hundred, Lee Hall Mansion, Piney Grove at Southall's Plantation, Tuckahoe Plantation, Weston Manor, Westover Plantation and Wilton, as well as the English Garden, Indian Fields Tavern and Surrey House Restaurant. Admission. For more information, call 804-829-2196 or go online at www.pineygrove.com.

December 1 – 31

Newport News

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Winter Wonderland at Hunt Club Farm, Hunt Club Farm

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**** December 1 – January 3, 2010**

Williamsburg and Yorktown

A Colonial Christmas, Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Victory Center

At Jamestown Settlement, a film and interpretive presentations compare and contrast 17th-century English Christmas customs with how the season may have been observed in the colony's early years. Daily tours and programs in the outdoor living-history areas allow visitors to learn about the English colonists' first Christmas at sea in 1606, Indian hospitality shown to Capt. John Smith's trading party during a winter storm, and about the Lord of Misrule, “Grand captain of all mischief.” At the Yorktown Victory Center, hear accounts of Christmas and winter in Revolutionary War military encampments and glimpse holiday preparations on a 1780s Virginia farm. Daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-253-4838 or go online at www.historyisfun.org.

** = Multiple Month Event

December 2, 9 and 16

Newport News

Mid-Week Holiday Market, Port Warwick

Enjoy the freshest local seasonal produce, a variety of pasture-raised and grass-fed meats, poultry and seafood, plus flowers, herbs, baked goods, sauces, salsas and hand-made soaps and lotions. Hand-crafted items, including candles, candles, pottery, handbags, art and accessories are also for sale. The expanded holiday market also includes crafters and a variety of holiday-themed items. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free; items for sale. For more information, call 757- 771-9343 or go online at www.portwarwick.com.

December 3 – 4

Hampton

Santa's Attic Arts and Crafts Show, Hampton City Hall

Come down to Hampton City Hall for this popular two-day event to take a look at some of Santa's helpers' most unique hand-crafted items! Whether shopping for that perfect holiday gift or picking up a little treasure for personal enjoyment, this arts and crafts show is not to be missed. It will bring lots of distinctive treasures for fun and low-cost gift-giving. *Santa's Attic* features the best talents of area crafters as they showcase an array of original, hand-made items along with an assortment of tasty, baked treats. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-727-8311 or go online at www.hampton.gov/parks.

December 3 – 5

Newport News

USAF Heritage of America Band Holiday Concert, Ferguson Center for the Arts

An annual holiday tradition, compliments of the USAF Heritage of America Band. Admission is free; however, a ticket is required. Patrons without tickets will be admitted on a space-available basis 15 minutes before the start of the concert. 7:00 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-764-2934 or go online at www.heritageofamericaband.af.mil.

December 3 – 6

Richmond

Bizarre Bazaar's 34th Christmas Collection, Richmond Raceway Complex

This large-scale show provides a unique offering of gourmet foods, toys, clothing and accessories, imported and handmade jewelry, quality crafts and fine arts, antiques, reproduction and hand-painted furniture and, of course, holiday treats, ornaments and decorative accessories just to mention a few. You don't want to miss this kick-off to the holiday season! Thursday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-673-7015 or go online at www.thebizarrebazaar.com.

December 3 – 31

Newport News

Antebellum Holidays, Lee Hall Mansion

Guests step back in time to enjoy the wonder and elegance of a mid-19th century Christmas. Lee Hall is replete with all of the finery and decor which a gentleman farmer and his family could provide. Monday, Wednesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-888-3371 or go online at www.leehall.org.

December 3 – 31

Newport News

Christmas at Endview, Endview Plantation

Experience a rural Virginia Christmas. Visit Endview Plantation and see the greenery and period decorations that brighten the house for the 1861 holidays. Monday, Wednesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-887-1862 or go online at www.endview.org.

December 3 – 31

Newport News

A Newsome Christmas, The Newsome House Museum & Cultural Center

The museum offers its annual holiday open house during the month of December. Stop by for a glimpse of distinctive festive décor with an ethnic and nostalgic flair. Monday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-247-2360 or go online at www.newsomehouse.org.

December 4

Richmond

Grand Illumination of the James Center, Downtown

It's the 25th Annual Grand Illumination of the James Center reindeer and downtown Richmond office buildings. Experience the magic of the season with two blocks of family entertainment including the Varina High School Marching Band, The Sugar Plum Fairy from the Richmond Ballet, the VCU Trombone Choir, the Coventry Ringers, harpist Rickie Denton, singer Patsy Butler, the Virginia Piedmont Model Railroad Club and much more. Radio Disney will be at James Center to entertain children with delightful activities. Venture Richmond will be distributing free glow necklaces for children throughout the River District. 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Free. For more information, call 804-344-3232.

December 4

Newport News

Hollydazzle, City Center at Oyster Point

Hampton Roads' most unique holiday event combines fireworks, special effects and music in a spectacular show presented "in the round" on the Fountain Plaza. Free children's activities and holiday performances. 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Fountain Plaza. Free admission; food and beverages for sale. For more information, call 757-926-1400 or go online at www.nnparks.com.

December 4

Yorktown

Yorktown Celebrates Christmas: Illumination and Christmas Tree Lighting, Citywide

The holiday lights go on and the festive season begins at with entertainment at the Victory Monument, followed by the Procession of Lights through historic Yorktown to Riverwalk Landing. The tree lighting ceremony, includes holiday entertainment and a visit from Santa. Sponsored by the York County Historical Committee. 6:30 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-890-3500 or go online at www.yorkcounty.gov/tourism.

December 4 – 6

Virginia Beach

Broadway at the Center presents Holiday Melody, Sandler Center for the Performing Arts

Experience all the magic of the holiday season wrapped in a colorful, warm blanket of song and dance. Revive some memories and make some new ones in this joyous, spectacular musical extravaganza. Celebrate with the entire family. Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-385-2787 or go online at www.broadwayatthecenter.com.

December 4 – 6, 11 – 13 and 18 – 20

Newport News

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, Peninsula Community Theatre

In this hilarious Christmas tale, a couple struggling to put on a church Christmas pageant is faced with casting the Herdman kids – probably the most inventively awful kids in history. You won't believe the mayhem, and the fun, when the Herdmans collide head-on with the Christmas story! This delightful comedy is adapted from the best-selling book and the only story ever to run twice in *McCall's Magazine*. Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2:30 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-595-5728 or go online at www.pctlive.org.

December 4 – 24

Norfolk

A Christmas Carol, The Wells Theatre

The holiday classic is back and better than ever! Dickens' timeless story of Ebenezer Scrooge and his encounters with the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future has entertained and enlightened thousands of our patrons, teaching us the true meaning of the holiday season. Admission. For more information, call 757-627-1234 or go online at www.vastage.com.

December 4 – 6, 11 – 13, 18 – 24 and 26 – 27

Williamsburg

Christmas Town at Busch Gardens, Busch Gardens

On every street corner you'll hear the sounds of the season. From traditional Christmas favorites in Banbury Cross, England, to country-style classics in New France and Celtic sounds in the streets of Killarney, Ireland, this is the music you love. And it's a place where you can also see new holiday-themed shows and ride some of your favorite rides. 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 800-343-7946 or go online at www.christmastown.com.

December 5

Williamsburg

Colonial Christmas Antiques & Artisan's Show, Lexington George Washington Inn

Master Craftsmen, many of them juried into the "Top Traditional Craftsmen in America" by *Early American Life Magazine*, will be exhibiting. Collector & gift-quality wares for sale, as well as traditional furniture and accessories, floorcloths, weaving, pewter, historical art, ornaments, fine jewelry, Windsor chairs, *Scherensnitte*, silhouettes, dolls, Folk Art, hooked rugs, fine antiques and vintage items. Some exhibitors will be in Colonial costumes demonstrating their traditional crafts. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-484-0872 or go online at www.colonialchristmasshow.com.

December 5

Hampton

Hampton Holly Days Lighted Boat Parade, Downtown Hampton Waterfront

Whether you are a boater or a landlubber, you won't want to miss this nautical parade of over 30 sail and powerboats up the Hampton River. Sip hot cocoa and cider on the beautiful Downtown Hampton waterfront as Santa leads the parade! 7 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-727-1271 or go online at www.downtownhampton.com.

December 5

Virginia Beach

Holiday Parade at the Beach, Oceanfront

Marching bands, lighted floats, equestrian units, fire trucks, performing dance groups, motorcycles and more join forces to present a dazzling and entertaining night of fun for all ages. And best of all, Santa himself makes a grand appearance to greet all his loyal fans as the evening winds down! Free. For more information, call 757-491-7866 or go online at www.beachstreetusa.com.

December 5

Newport News

'Tis the Season, Peninsula Community Theatre - Children's Theatre

This joyful holiday play whisks you through season celebrations from around the world. Creep softly with the Tomten, who guards the farm in his native Sweden and outfoxes the Fox one cold, snowy night. Travel southward with the Sun who keeps her promise to the trees to return in this haunting Cherokee solstice story. Climb into the sleigh with Mrs. Claus, who thinks Christmas needs a little shaking up and be drawn into a favorite Hanukkah story. Be prepared to sing along including everyone's favorite version of the "Twelve Days of Christmas". A holiday must see! A Children's Theatre of Charlotte, NC production. 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-595-5728 or go online at www.pctlive.org.

★★ = Multiple Month Event

December 5 **Richmond**

Ukrop's 26th Annual Christmas Parade, Downtown

More than two miles long, the parade features floats, bands, huge helium balloons, majorettes, horses and, of course, Santa. 10 a.m. Free. For more information, call 804-559-6113 or go online at www.richmondchristmasparade.org.

December 5 **Williamsburg**

Williamsburg Area Community Christmas Parade, Merchants Square

Sponsored by the Williamsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, this annual community parade features 100 entries, including floats and marching bands. 9 a.m. Free. For more information, call 800-368-6511 or go online at www.williamsburgcc.com.

December 5 **Hampton**

Winter Wonderland Holiday Tree Lighting, Carousel Park

It's a winter wonderland event! There will be holiday music, hot chocolate with other winter treats, horse and carriage rides, festive lights and decorated trees. Plus, a holiday tree lighting followed by fireworks! 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-727-0900 or go online at www.vasc.org.

December 5 **Yorktown**

Yorktown Celebrates Christmas: Lighted Boat Parade, Yorktown Beach

Decorated in holiday spirit, area boaters parade the York River in competition for "Best of Show." Enjoy hot cider and musical performances in the glow of a beach bonfire while awaiting the magnificent parade of lights. Sponsored by the Yorktown Lighted Boat Parade Committee and Wormley Creek Marina. 6 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-890-4970 or go online at www.yorkcounty.gov/tourism.

December 5 **Yorktown**

Yorktown Christmas Market on Main Street, Historic District

Join us for Yorktown's annual Christmas Market on historic Main Street. The market features musical entertainment, living history exhibits, antique cars, roasted chestnuts, arts and crafts, and much more. Sponsored by York County and the York County Historical Museum. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-890-3500 or go online at www.yorkcounty.gov/tourism.

December 5 and 12 **Hampton**

Breakfast with Santa, Virginia Air and Space Center

Enjoy the 9th annual breakfast with 'Ol Saint Nick! This family event features make-n-take activities for children, a seated breakfast and photos with Santa. Seating is limited. Advance tickets are required. Advance tickets are required. 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-727-0900 or go online at www.vasc.org.

December 5, 12 and 19 **Richmond**

Saturday Brunch with Santa, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Join Santa for brunch in the Tea House. The jolly old elf will make a special appearance and children will be able to tell him their "wish-lists." Parents are encouraged to bring cameras for photos; Tea House menu features kid-friendly items. 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-262-9887 or go online at www.lewisginter.org.

December 5, 12, 19 and 20

Virginia Beach

Teddy Bear Tea, The Founders Inn and Spa

The magic of the season comes to life as children sip Christmas tea with a new best friend. Each child receives a commemorative teddy bear to take home and cuddle! Reservations required. 2 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-366-5700 or go online at www.foundersinn.com.

December 5 – 6; 12 – 13 and 19 – 20

Newport News

Santa @ City Center, City Center at Oyster Point

Plan a visit with the man himself for a magical photo, surrounded by the sights and sounds of the holidays, plus carriage rides and carolers. Enjoy the unique shops of City Center and find the perfect gifts for everyone on your list. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Free admission. For more information, call 757-282-2822 or go online at www.citycenteratoysterpoint.com.

December 5 – 6, 12 – 13 and 19 – 20

Virginia Beach

SCUBA Santa, Virginia Aquarium

Santa descends into the depths of the Chesapeake Bay Aquarium to feed the fishes! 11 a.m. to noon. Admission. For more information, call 757-385-3474 or go online at www.virginiaaquarium.com.

December 5 – 20

Virginia Beach

Breakfast with Santa, The Founders Inn and Spa

We all know he likes cookies and milk, but what does Santa prefer for breakfast, eggs or pancakes? Does he like jam or cream cheese on his bagel? Let your kids find out. Bring them by Swan Terrace restaurant for the chance to celebrate the season by sharing a meal with the jolly elf in the red suit. Reservations required. 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-366-5700 or go online at www.foundersinn.com.

December 5 – 31

Charles City County

Centuries of Christmas, Berkeley Plantation (Midway between Richmond and Williamsburg)

Special Christmas tours through the holiday season. The elegant 1726 mansion will be beautifully decorated with fresh greenery from Berkeley's gardens. Costumed guides will add a special touch to your holiday season with stories of Christmas at Berkeley through four centuries of history. Enjoy our famous hospitality and make Berkeley a part of your holiday tradition. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-829-6018 or go online at www.berkeleyplantation.com.

December 6

Williamsburg

Grand Illumination, Colonial Williamsburg

Colonial Williamsburg celebrates a momentous occasion on December 6, 2009. Not only is it the 75th anniversary of Grand Illumination, it is the Fifes and Drums' 50th performance at the traditional Christmas celebration. The celebration begins with a variety of entertainment throughout the Historic Area. The Fifes and Drums and other costumed performers present holiday entertainment. Candles are lit in public buildings, shops and homes at 6:15 p.m. and fireworks are launched at three Historic Area locations: the Governor's Palace, Magazine and Capitol. After the fireworks, entertainment resumes on the outdoor stages and continues until 7:30 p.m. Free. For more information, call 800-447-8679 or go online at www.history.org.

December 6

Portsmouth

Historic Port Norfolk Holiday Tour of Homes, Port Norfolk Historic District

Enjoy holiday decorated historic homes dating back to the late 1890s in Port Norfolk, one of 5 historic districts in Portsmouth. In 1890, the Port Norfolk Land Company purchased 175 acres of what is now the Port Norfolk Historic District. In 1895, a horse-drawn streetcar line was introduced on Mt Vernon Avenue. Most of the homes are single family; bungalows, foursquares and Queen Anne homes predominate. Many of the more ornate and grand homes are found along Bayview Avenue with a view of the Elizabeth River. The neighborhood was listed on the State and National Registers in 1983. 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-399-4122 or go online at www.portnorfolk.org.

December 6

Richmond

An Old-Fashioned Christmas at Maymont, Maymont

Celebrate the Christmas season at Maymont! Elegantly dressed Victorian ladies and gentlemen welcome you to the Dooleys' home to see the grand Christmas tree, lavish dining room and the gifts and games that entertained guests in 1893. Enjoy a horse-drawn carriage ride, find unique toys and gifts in the Maymont Holiday Shop, listen to festive music, and let a roaring fire and good food warm you. Noon to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-358-7166 or go online at www.maymont.org.

December 6

Williamsburg

Williamsburg Winery Holiday Open House, Williamsburg Winery

Celebrate the holiday season in true Colonial style at the Williamsburg Winery prior to the Grand Illumination in Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Area. Enjoy lite fare, award winning wines, tours, shopping discounts and more. Noon to 4 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-229-0999 go online at www.williamsburgwinery.com.

December 6

Yorktown

Yorktown Celebrates Christmas: Cookies with Santa, York Hall

Enjoy cookies with Santa in the Gallery at York Hall. Children of all ages can visit with Santa and do some holiday shopping. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-890-4490 or go online at www.yorkcounty.gov/tourism.

December 6, 13 and 20

Virginia Beach

Sundays with Santa, Virginia Aquarium

Join Santa and his elves for activities and education programs from noon to 3 p.m. in the Marsh Pavilion. Noon to 3 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-385-3474 or go online at www.virginiaaquarium.com.

December 7

Newport News

Dave Koz & Friends: A Smooth Jazz Christmas 2009, Ferguson Center for the Arts

After rocking around the Christmas tree last year, six-time, Grammy-nominated saxophonist and composer Dave Koz returns to do it again! Koz loads up his sax with hit after hit, as well as timeless Christmas classics, that will leave you full of holiday spirit. He is joined by the accomplished pianist David Benoit, trumpeter Rick Braun, vocalist Brenda Russell and guitarist Peter White. Koz, who has cemented his reputation as one of the most expressive artists in contemporary music, is sure to make your holiday season warmer and brighter! 7 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-594-8752 or go online at www.fergusoncenter.org.

December 8 – 9

Hampton

Danu: Christmas in Ireland, The American Theatre

Back by immense popular demand, Danu celebrates a traditional Irish Christmas in *An Nollaig in Eirinn*. Thrill to the sounds of virtuoso players on flutes, fiddle, button accordion, percussion and the gorgeous voice of *Muirinn Nic Amhlaoibh*. Danu is joined by some very special guests (step dancers) in this irresistible holiday performance. 7:30 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-7227-2787 or go online at www.hamptonarts.net.

December 10 – 11

Newport News

St. Nick at Endview, Endview Plantation

Let your child experience the magic of an 1861 Christmas with a visit to see St. Nick. Refreshments will be provided. Parents are to bring two presents: one wrapped for their child and a new unwrapped present for a needy child. Donated toys will be given to the Marine Corp's *Toys for Tots* program. Admission. Reservations required. 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-887-1862 or go online at www.endview.org.

December 10 – 13

Richmond

Tuckahoe Plantation's Candlelight Christmas Tour, Tuckahoe Plantation

Begin your holidays with a step back in time. Tuckahoe Plantation will be offering tours of the house, adorned in Christmas decorations under the glow of candlelight this holiday season. Walk the halls of this Colonial mansion and take in the sights and smells of Christmas past. Join us this holiday season in celebrating 276 years at Thomas Jefferson's boyhood home. The gift shop, located in the Jefferson Schoolhouse, where our third president first attended classes, will be open, offering books, gift items and holiday greens for sale. Light refreshments will be available in the "Old Kitchen." 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-379-9554 or go online at www.tuckahoeplantation.com.

December 11

Newport News

Holiday Frost, Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center

This holiday season, the Center will be transformed into a winter wonderland as we present *Holiday Frost*, a memorable evening for community children. Children will have a chance to meet Santa, make ornaments, play musical chairs to holiday tunes, listen to readings of classic holiday tales, and experience a hands-on life-size Candy Land. At the close of the evening, everyone is invited to view an illumination of the Center. 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-247-8969 or go online at www.downing-gross.org.

December 11 – 12

Williamsburg

Music in the World of George Frideric Handel, Bruton Parish Church

Celebrate the life and music of George Frideric Handel with a candlelight performance of the Christmas portion of "Messiah" by the Bruton Parish Choir with chamber orchestra. Admission. For more information, call 800-447-8679 or go online at www.williamsburgfestival.com.

December 11 – 12

Portsmouth

Olde Towne Candlelight Home Tour, Historic District

Sponsored by the Olde Towne Civic League, the Olde Towne Candlelight Home Tour takes spectators on a self-guided tour through some of Olde Towne's finest homes. Indulge in the sounds of the season as we entertain you with musicians throughout the neighborhood, along with strolling carolers on the streets. Friday, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-714-3223 or go online at www.otcl.org.

★★ = Multiple Month Event

December 11 – 13

Norfolk

Holidays in Virginia, TCC Roper Performing Arts Center

It's Hurrah for the holidays! In the style of Radio City Music Hall, an original musical revue featuring holiday favorites from yesterday and today, precision kick line dancers and a celebration of all faiths. Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 3 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-627-5437 or go online at www.hurrahplayers.com.

December 11 and 18

Richmond

Maymont by Moonlight, Maymont

Take an intimate holiday tour of Maymont...by moonlight. Horse-drawn carriages transport arriving guests down the luminary-lit lane to Maymont, where Victorian ladies and gentlemen escort guests through the beautifully decorated home of Major and Mrs. James Dooley. Carol singing and toasted marshmallows are enjoyed along the way, and this magical evening concludes with light Christmas refreshments. 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission. For more information call, 804-358-7166 or go online at www.maymont.org.

December 12

Norfolk

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever & Happy Hanukkah, My Friend, TCC Roper Performing Arts Center

Based on the book by Barbara Robinson, this funny and heartwarming play tells the story of an unlikely group of kids who learn the true meaning of Christmas. A 17-year holiday tradition in Hampton Roads, this one-night-only event is presented with *Happy Hanukkah, My Friend*, a short program celebrating the Festival of Lights. 7 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-627-5437 or go online at www.hurrahplayers.com.

December 12

Hampton

Hampton Holly Days Parade, Downtown Hampton

Enjoy the magic of the Peninsula's largest illuminated parade featuring marching bands, floats, balloons, drill teams and a beauty queen or two, along with everyone's favorite elf: Santa Claus! 7 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-727-6784 or go online at www.hampton.gov/parks.

December 12

Richmond

Handmade Holiday, The Visual Art Center of Richmond

The Richmond Craft Mafia and the Visual Arts Center of Richmond invite you to be green this Holiday. Buy Handmade and Shop Local at the second annual Handmade Holiday, showcasing the work of 40 diverse artists and designers, all from the Richmond area. Find fresh takes on traditional crafts like pottery, jewelry, clothing, art, toys and more. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free; items for sale. For more information call, 804-353-0094 or go online at www.handmadeholiday.com.

December 12

Richmond

James River Parade of Lights, Osborne Park

Looking for a unique holiday event for the entire family? You won't want to miss the annual James River Parade of Lights sponsored by the James River Advisory Commission, in cooperation with Henrico Recreation and Parks. Henrico County's viewing celebration will take place at Osborne Park. Join us around the bonfire as we enjoy holiday music and activities to celebrate the magic of the season. 3 p.m. Free; items for sale. For more information call, 804-501-5121 or go online at www.co.henrico.va.us/rec.

December 12

Newport News

Let's Talk About Kwanzaa, James A. Fields House

What is the meaning of Habari Gani? Do you know the seven principles of Kwanzaa? Do you know the seven symbols of Kwanzaa? Come hear from the voices of the past and learn from the wisdom of those who today use these principles as guidepost for living. This will be a day of fun and a celebration to reaffirm our commitment to "unity in the community." 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Suggested donation; items for sale. For more information, call 757-245-1991.

December 12

Virginia Beach

A Local Holiday Food Market, Old Beach Farmers Market

Vendors will offer acclaimed charcuterie meats, chocolates, organic flowers, Lynnhaven Oysters, Virginia's own cheeses and wines – even goat's milk soap and table top Christmas trees. Shop for seasonal and other heirloom vegetables, Eastern Shore clams and other seafood, country butter and whipping cream, freshly-made andouille sausage and Caramont, Everona and Monastery cheeses. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free; items for sale. For more information, call 757-428-5444 or go online at www.oldbeachfarmersmarket.com.

December 12

Portsmouth

Olde Towne Holiday Music Festival, Historic District

This musical tribute to the spirit of the holiday season includes sidewalk bonfires, street entertainers, children's activities and musical performances ranging from barbershop harmony and jazz to steel drums and brass ensemble tunes. Concerts are held in a variety of High Street locations, both indoor and outdoor, such as historic churches and museums. Olde Towne shops are also open for your all holiday shopping needs. Noon to 6 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-393-8393.

December 12

Portsmouth

Olde Towne Santa Arrives by Ferry, High Street Landing

In celebration of the *Olde Towne Holiday Music Festival*, Santa will arrive by Elizabeth River Ferry just before noon to greet children at the festival. Be sure to bring your camera. Don't miss this great photo opportunity to have pictures with Santa for free! To add to the festivities, holiday carolers will perform and there will be hot coffee, hot chocolate and hot spiced apple cider for sale. Noon to 2 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-478-0056.

December 12

Newport News

Peninsula Children's Chorus, Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center

Enjoy a special concert with the Peninsula Children's Chorus. At the 8 p.m. performance, the Super Jazz Band will join in the festivities. 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-247-8969 or go online at www.downing-gross.org.

December 12

Newport News

Soulful Christmas Celebration, The Newsome House Museum & Cultural Center

A full day of holiday happenings! Visit and take pictures with our African-American Santa. Enjoy sounds of the season provided by area youth choirs. Find special gifts from local craftsmen and craftswomen. Give back to the community by donating to the Marine Corp's *Toys for Tots* program. Free. For more information, call 757-247-2360 or go online at www.newsomeshouse.org.

December 12

Hampton

Theatre IV in The Shoemaker & The Christmas Elves, The American Theatre

Come out and enjoy heartwarming holiday music for the young and young at heart! This production is a delightful yuletide spin on the classic Brothers Grimm fairy tale – the magical story of the poor shoemaker and his elves who show him the true meaning of Christmas. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-722-2787 or go online at www.hamptonarts.net.

December 12

Yorktown

Toyland Parade at Riverwalk Landing, Riverwalk Landing

Seasonal activities and holiday music include a parade throughout Riverwalk Landing. Children, adults and families are all welcome to participate by decorating a stroller or wagon, dressing in seasonal attire, or simply showing off their holiday spirit for the festive parade. Additional activities, including a visit from Santa Claus, a Mrs. Claus Storytelling Show, holiday music and an opportunity to ride the Riverwalk Landing Polar Express will follow the parade. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-890-3500 or go online at www.riverwalklanding.com.

December 12

Newport News

Wintertime Wonders, Virginia Living Museum

Explore the winter season through stories, songs, games, and live animal programs. We'll discover how polar bears, penguins and other animals survive the cold and we'll make a "cool" craft to take home. Enjoy your holiday shopping while your children enjoy and learn. Program times: Grades K-1, 9:30 a.m. to noon; Grades 2-3, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Admission; advance registration required. For more information, call 757-595-9135 or go online at www.thevlm.org.

December 12 – 13

Portsmouth

Children's Christmas Shoppe, Trinity Episcopal Church

A place where only children, ages 3 to 12, are allowed to shop for holiday gifts! All presents are one price, which includes gift-wrapping. Part of the *Olde Towne Holiday Music Festival*. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Sunday, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. For more information, call 757-393-0431.

December 12, 19 and 26

Charles City County

***James River Plantations' Progressive Candlelight Carol Tour, Piney Grove, Ashland and Ladysmith* (Midway between Richmond and Williamsburg)**

Christmas past comes to life during special evenings in the James River Plantation Country. Explore history and holiday musical traditions at Piney Grove (1790), Ashland (1835) and Ladysmith (1857). You will enjoy the unique collection of Gordineer family Christmas decorations, a collection that spans five generations. 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-829-2196 or go online at www.pineygrove.com.

December 13

Newport News

Virginia Symphony Orchestra: Handel's Messiah, Ferguson Center for the Arts

The greatest story ever told. The most majestic music ever conceived. Handel's inspirational Messiah, complete with acclaimed soloists and the VSO Chorus, is paired with another great holiday story set to music, The Gift of the Magi, by acclaimed American composer, Adolphus Hailstork. Enjoy dance and vocal storytelling by Todd Rosenlieb Dance and the Virginia Children's Chorus. JoAnn Falletta, conductor. 2:30 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-892-6366 or go online at www.virginiasymphony.org.

December 13

Newport News

York River Symphony Orchestra Concert: A Feast of Lights, Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center

Join the York River Symphony Orchestra for a holiday-themed concert, which will include a Christmas sing-along and music from Respighi, Sibelius and others. 3 p.m. Free admission with reservation. For more information, call 757-247-8969 or go online at www.downing-gross.org.

December 15

Richmond

Candlelight Tours at Maymont Mansion, Maymont

Experience Virginia's Gilded Age treasure, the elegant showplace of James and Sallie Dooley, in this special after-hours holiday tour. Maymont Mansion is aglow as Victorian ladies and gentlemen share the gracious traditions of Christmas 1893. Lavish tree trimmings, the opulent dining room, spectacular decorations and the elaborate preparations belowstairs bring the wonders of a 19th-century Christmas to life. 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Admission. For more information call, 804-358-7166 or go online at www.maymont.org.

December 18

Hampton

A Gospel Christmas with The Holmes Brothers, The American Theatre

The spine-tingling harmonies, boundless energy and telepathic musicianship of The Holmes Brothers mix Saturday night's roadhouse rock with the gospel fervor of Sunday's church service. The rhythmic foundation laid down by Sherman's bass and Popsy's drumming perfectly compliment Wendell's hard-driving guitar solos. Even more gripping is their amazing three part harmony – mixing Wendell's gruff and gravelly vocals with Popsy's soaring falsetto and Sherman's rich baritone – creating a multi-layered and ornately textured sound. 8 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-722-2787 or go online at www.hamptonarts.net.

December 19

Newport News

"Habari Gani!" Kwanzaa Workshop, The Newsome House Museum & Cultural Center

A family workshop that will provide information to help families celebrate this week-long cultural celebration. The principles of Kwanzaa, craft ideas and recipes will be discussed and demonstrated. Noon to 2 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-247-2360 or go online at www.newsomeshouse.org.

December 19

Virginia Beach

Sailing with Santa, Virginia Aquarium

Take a 45-minute cruise on Owls Creek with Santa and his crew. Enjoy refreshments, games and activities while Santa greets his guests for a unique photo opportunity. 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-385-3474 or go online at www.virginiaaquarium.com.

December 19

Hampton

Tenor Brandon Wood: I'll Be Home for Christmas, The American Theatre

Hampton's own Brandon Wood comes home in this very special Christmas celebration. A rising star in the world of opera, Brandon has already been seen on the stages of the New York City Opera, the Santa Fe Opera and, of course, here at the Virginia Opera. His program will include some of your holiday favorites as well as some operatic surprises. 8 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-722-2787 or go online at www.hamptonarts.net.

December 19 – 20

Charles City County

***Berkeley's Colonial Christmas, Berkeley Plantation* (Midway between Richmond and Williamsburg)**

Come to historic Berkeley Plantation and learn how the Harrison family celebrated Christmas during the 18th century. Partake in the festive atmosphere created by colonial music and decorations of fresh greenery and natural arrangements from Berkeley's gardens. Costumed guides will add a special treat to your holiday season with stories about Christmas hospitality over 200 years ago. Holiday refreshments will be served. 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-829-6018 or go online at www.berkeleyplantation.com.

December 19 – 20

Newport News

CAPA Fund Presents The Nutcracker, Ferguson Center for the Arts

Enjoy the splendor and beauty of Hampton Roads' most exciting classical ballet production of the holiday season! A magical and lighthearted story of a small girl's dream on Christmas Eve, this CAPA produced *Nutcracker* delivers a sparkling adaptation of the E.T.A. Hoffmann tale, coupled with Tchaikovsky's classic score. The production features award-winning soloists, brilliant costumes and scenery, dazzling special effects, and an outstanding cast of more than 80 performers. Presented by the Community Alliance for the Performing Arts Fund and choreographed by Sandra Balestracci. Saturday, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-594-8752 or go online at www.fergusoncenter.org.

December 20

Newport News

The Black Candle: The Story of Kwanzaa, The Newsome House Museum & Cultural Center

Screening of *The Black Candle*, the first feature film about Kwanzaa. Directed by M. K. Asante, Jr., this award-winning film is narrated by Maya Angelou. Ms. Angelou says about *The Black Candle*, "More than a film about a holiday, this is a celebration of a people." 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission. For more information, call 757-247-2360 or go online at www.newsomehouse.org.

December 20

Newport News

Virginia Choral Society: A Family Festival of Carols, Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center

This concert is a family-favorite mixture of classics and standards, with new and exciting arrangements and, of course, a sing-along. 3 p.m. Free admission with reservation. For more information, call 757-247-8969 or go online at www.downing-gross.org.

December 22 – 23

Virginia Beach

A Founders Inn Evening with Santa, The Founders Inn and Spa

Children, all dressed in their holiday pajamas, will snuggle up in blankets to hear Santa Claus read *The Polar Express*. Children enjoy milk & cookies and get to take home a commemorative bell. 6 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-424-5511 or go online at www.foundersinn.com.

December 26 – 27

Richmond

Holiday Glitter: Monument Avenue After Dark, Lee Monument

Enjoy the lights and glitter of Monument Avenue decked out for the holidays. This early evening stroll combines history with a touch of glitz! Dress comfortably, and please bring a flashlight. Meet your guide at the Lee Monument at Allen and Monument Avenues. 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-649-0711 or go online at www.richmondhistorycenter.org.

December 31

Hampton

The Hot Club of San Francisco with Isabelle Fontaine: Meet Me in Paris, The American Theatre

Celebrate the New Year in style, Parisian style that is, with the famed Hot Club of San Francisco. Love songs and driving gypsy jazz are the winning combination made famous during the 20's and 30's in Paris by the legendary Hot Club de Paris with Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli. The Hot Club of San Francisco takes us on a ride down the Seine and through the heart of the City of Light with the magical sounds of guitar and fiddle mixed with the sweet and sultry voice of Isabelle Fontaine. This charming concert will be followed by a reception and dancing with the Hot Club in the new Gordon-Kearney wing of the Theatre. 9 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-7227-2787 or go online at www.hamptonarts.net.

December 31

Richmond

New Year's Eve Family Frolic, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Family activities in the afternoon with live entertainment and crafts; visitors can stay and enjoy *GardenFest of Lights* later in the evening. 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information call 804-262-9887 or go online at www.lewisginter.org.

December 31

Newport News

New Year's Eve Masquerade Celebration, City Center at Oyster Point

Celebrate New Year's Eve at City Center at Oyster Point with Amy's Dance Studio. Dance the night away and enjoy special performances that include the Latin Ballet of Virginia and local ballroom dance professionals. Enjoy appetizers, a buffet dinner, a dessert bar, a midnight champagne toast and breakfast and leave with a "swag bag." Formal dress; masks provided. Midnight. Admission. For more information, call 757-596-2697 or go online at www.amysdancestudio.com.

December 31

Newport News

Noon Year's Eve Celebration, Virginia Living Museum

The whole family can enjoy this day-time New Year's celebration. Meet special animal friends from the Teeny Tiny Farm, such as a miniature horse, donkey, alpaca, cow, lamb, pygora goat, pot-bellied piglet and rabbit, special animal guests from Oak Crest Farm and exotic birds from the Peninsula Caged Bird Society. Celebrate New Year's around the world with international crafts. There will also be games, face painting and some international-themed entertainment. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-595-1900 or go online at www.thevlm.org.

December 31

Virginia Beach

Noon Year's Eve Celebration, Virginia Aquarium

Children and adults can join Radio Disney for a Noon Year's Eve Celebration in the Promenade Room with games, activities and sparkling non-alcoholic beverages. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-385-3474 or go online at www.virginiaaquarium.com.

December 31

Portsmouth

Olde Towne Scottish Walk, Historic District

This eagerly anticipated annual event is modeled after Scotland's Hogmanay Festival, a day when townspeople honor their community and merchants and offer blessings for prosperity in the coming year. The Olde Towne Scottish Walk, a procession led by pipe-and-drum bands, starts at Queen and Washington streets in the parking lot of Monumental United Methodist Church and ends at High Street Landing. Enjoy walking, pipe music, caroling and mini-concerts at Olde Towne restaurants and pubs. Pipe bands are welcome to join. Come wear your warmest woolens and plaids and join in the fun. Past events have included ancient weaponry demonstrations, children's story telling and free whiskey tastings. 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-650-3052.

January 2010

January 1

Newport News

Celebration in Lights, Newport News Park

Light up your holidays with the award-winning Celebration in Lights, a two-mile drive-through of spectacular animated scenes set in Newport News Park. Over 700,000 lights illuminate the beauty of Newport News Park's forests, fields, and ponds in this, Virginia's longest running drive-through light event. View multi-colored snowflakes, leaping reindeer, whimsical toys and forest animals, elegant swans and scenes from Virginia's past portrayed in a kaleidoscope of dazzling color. Over 200 displays, including 70 animated displays, are spread throughout a dozen theme areas, including "Winter Wonderland," "Forest Friends," "Battle of the Ironclads," "Santa's Enchanted Kingdom" and "Old Man Winter." Daily, 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission per bus or car. For more information, call 757-926-1400 or go online at www.nnparks.com.

January 1

Newport News

"Habari Gani?" – Imani: The Seventh Principle of Kwanzaa, James A. Fields House

Learn about the seventh principle of Kwanzaa at this informative program. 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Suggested donation; items for sale. For more information, call 757-245-1991.

January 1 – 3

Newport News

Artful Giving, Peninsula Fine Arts Center

Experience *Artful Giving* at the Peninsula Fine Arts Center. For the season, Pfac's Gallery Shop expands to feature decorations, accessories and gift items from around the corner and around the world. For this year's festivities, Jo Louise has chosen holiday décor and party items found nowhere else, along with unique artworks and unusual craft items both practical and whimsical. Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Wednesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Free. For more information, call 757-596-8175 or go online at www.pfac.org.

January 1 – 3

Williamsburg and Yorktown

A Colonial Christmas, Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown Victory Center

At Jamestown Settlement, a film and interpretive presentations compare and contrast 17th-century English Christmas customs with how the season may have been observed in the colony's early years. Daily tours and programs in the outdoor living-history areas allow visitors to learn about the English colonists' first Christmas at sea in 1606, Indian hospitality shown to Capt. John Smith's trading party during a winter storm, and about the Lord of Misrule, "Grand captain of all mischief." At the Yorktown Victory Center, hear accounts of Christmas and winter in Revolutionary War military encampments and glimpse holiday preparations on a 1780s Virginia farm. Daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-253-4838 or go online at www.historyisfun.org.

January 1 – 3

Williamsburg

Colonial Williamsburg's Holiday Season, Colonial Williamsburg

Nothing quite compares to spending the Christmas season in Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Area. Special programs, dining, entertainment, hotel packages, events for children and more are waiting to enchant guests who come to enjoy a magical season they'll not soon forget. Admission. For more information, call 800-447-8679 or go online at www.history.org.

January 1 – 3

Norfolk

Garden of Lights, Norfolk Botanical Garden

Whether it's your first visit or a family tradition, make memories you'll treasure forever on our two-mile driving tour through a million twinkling lights. This year, enjoy the new "Garden by the Sea" underwater adventure. Travel through a watery scene of lights with a mermaid and her friends as they celebrate Norfolk's Year of the Mermaid. 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission. For additional information, call 757-441-5830 or go online at www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org.

January 1 – 3

Virginia Beach

McDonald's Holiday Lights at the Beach, Boardwalk

Festive fish, jumping dolphins, frolicking porpoises – all in bright, colored lights against the clear night-time sky, are the stars of McDonald's Holiday Lights at the Beach, a nautical and holiday-themed light display at the Virginia Beach oceanfront! They are joined by Santa, elves and a 40-foot tall Christmas tree erected on the beach and in the beautiful parks along the boardwalk. For over 30 blocks, this "Fanta-Sea" of lights is sure to dazzle and amaze holiday travelers visiting the Beach. New displays are added each year so it's never the same show twice. A free CD of holiday music is provided to each vehicle entering the lights. Sunday to Thursday, 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday to Saturday, 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-491-7866 or go online at www.beachstreetusa.com.

January 1 – 3

Newport News

Season's Greetings: Holiday Scenes from the Noland Company Collection, Peninsula Fine Arts Center

This festive exhibition features dozens of nostalgic artworks featuring historic buildings from around the country decked out in their holiday finery. Each year the Noland Company, headquartered in Newport News, Va., commissioned artists to create an original painting for their company holiday cards. Most scenes feature joyous revelers in period costume enjoying the spirit of the season. Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Wednesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-596-8175 or go online at www.pfac.org.

January 1 – 6

Richmond

Maymont Mansion Holiday Tours, Maymont

Celebrate a very special Christmas at Maymont, decorated in authentic Victorian holiday splendor. Lavish tree trimmings, the opulent dining room and other spectacular decor bring the wonders of an upper-class Victorian Christmas to life. Meanwhile, in the basement of the mansion, the kitchen is a hub for holiday dinner preparations. Enjoy a tour with out-of-town guests or make it your own annual tradition. Tours available every half-hour. Noon to 5 p.m. Admission. For more information call, 804-358-7166 or go online at www.maymont.org.

January 1 – 11

Richmond

GardenFest of Lights, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

A holiday tradition! The show features more than a half million lights arranged in botanical themes throughout the 25-acre garden. With hundreds of trees wrapped in lights and winding pathways full of surprises, *GardenFest of Lights* is a magical experience for all ages. Holiday dinners are available with reservations. 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 804-262-9887 or go online at www.lewisginter.org.

January 1 – 18

Norfolk

MacArthur On Ice, MacArthur Center

There's only one place to skate outdoors during the holidays. At MacArthur Center, where you'll always find something special. Bring the family, bring your friends and enjoy the best skating extravaganza Norfolk's ever seen. With public skating, figure skating exhibitions, lessons, skating with the Norfolk Admirals and more, MacArthur Center is the place to be this holiday season. 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Admission. For more information, call 757-622-0280.

January 1 – March 8

Hampton

Downtown Hampton Central on Ice!, Virginia Air & Space Center

The Peninsula's only outdoor, holiday ice skating rink! Experience Downtown Hampton's Rockefeller Center when you step into a winter wonderland ice skating rink at the Virginia Air & Space Center. Skate rentals available. Admission. For more information, call 757-727-0900 or go to www.vasc.org.

NOTE: Events are subject to cancellation and date, time and admission changes. Admission fees are subject to change without notice. Please contact event planners directly to confirm information.

11/8/09