



2022 MILWAUKEE HOLIDAY LIGHTS FESTIVAL RECAP

For 24 seasons, the Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival presented by Johnson Financial Group has made spirits bright with its animated sculptures, interactive displays, and twinkling street décor. This dazzling gala of sight and sound attracted families to Downtown Milwaukee, November 17, 2022 – January 1, 2023. While here, visitors created holiday memories by attending the Festival's dynamic kickoff ceremony, dropping letters into Santa's Mailbox, jumping on the Jingle Bus, and visiting with Santa at several events. Here are a few highlights from the 2022 season.

KICKOFF CEREMONY RESUMES TO LIVE AND IN-PERSON

2,000+ Guests Gathered to Ring in the Season

After a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19, families returned to Pere Marquette Park to jump-start the holiday season. The night included live music, dance performances, fireworks, and a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Over 2,000 cookies and 2,000 cups of hot cocoa were consumed, and 850 light-up wands were given away. In addition, guests were treated to free Jingle Bus rides post-show to witness downtown's newly lit scenes.



WISN 12 AIRS THE KICKOFF CEREMONY FOR THREE NIGHTS

48,400+ Households Tuned in to "Holiday Lights: Live"

WISN 12, the Festival's television sponsor, aired the kickoff ceremony live at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 17, thanks to support from Stein's Garden & Home. The show re-aired at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 20 and 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 24. In total, the station's three broadcasts netted over 61,100 impressions for adults 18+.

DECORATIONS REMAIN THE TOP ATTRACTION

500,000+ Lights Illuminated Downtown

"Community Spirit Park" at Cathedral Square Park, "Christmas Chalet" at Pere Marquette Park and "Santa's Celebration Square" powered by We Energies" at Zeidler Union Square continued to delight guests with larger-than-life sculptures and a collective half million lights. Wisconsin Avenue shone bright with its succession of cascading chandeliers and Red Arrow Park received a twinkling treatment, too. Meanwhile, the mood at "Community Spirit Park" carried on as over 90 trees were decorated by schools and community organizations.



WEBSITE REMAINS GO-TO RESOURCE FOR AREA MOMS

83,700+ Website Sessions

Between November 1 – December 31, 83,779 sessions were accrued on the Festival's website. Approximately 60% of visitors were women and 50% were between ages 25 and 44.

JINGLE BUS TOURS RETURN TO CONVENIENTLY LINK SIGHTS

5,120 Riders Jumped on the Jingle Bus

Visitors were acquainted with downtown's lights and sights via the return of the Jingle Bus—a motorcoach bus operated by Coach USA. New this year, riders purchased tickets in advance online. Meanwhile, eight local actors were hired to narrate the 40-minute tour, which departed from The Avenue. Spanish tours were also offered on select nights, thanks to a partnership with Estamos Unidos. In all, 800 Spanish-speaking tours were booked.

SANTA'S MAILBOX CONTINUES TO CONNECT GENERATIONS

1,525 Letters Personalized to Boys & Girls

Thanks to support from Educators Credit Union, Serving Older Adults, and National Letter Carriers Association Branch 2, over 1,500 letters were personalized and mailed to children in our community. Letters were received at Santa's Mailbox in Cathedral Square Park.

DOWNTOWN LANDMARKS PRESERVED IN ORNAMENT SERIES

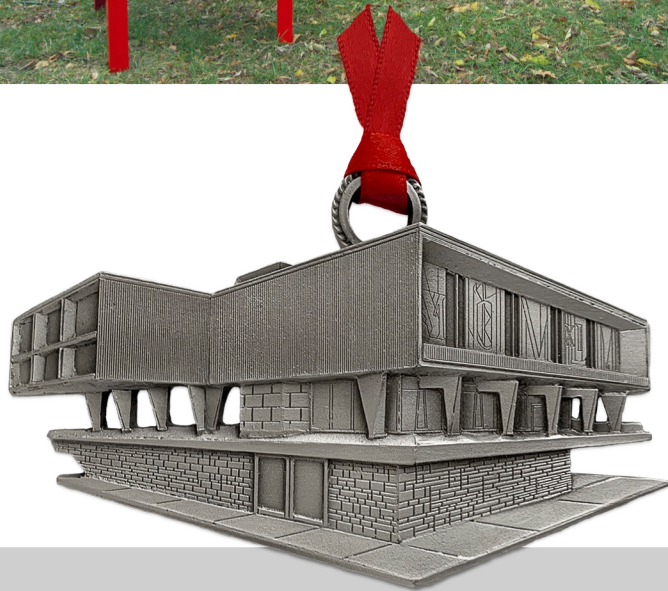
223 War Memorial Center Ornaments Purchased

Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival ornaments continue to be one-of-a-kind keepsakes. Each year features an iconic downtown landmark cast in pewter. The 2022 edition was the War Memorial Center. Over the course of the season, 384 ornaments were purchased from the 22-edition collection.

40-PAGE GUIDE HIGHLIGHTS SHOPPING, DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS

7,500 Brochures Distributed

The Festival continued to produce a comprehensive events guide, highlighting shows, sporting events and art exhibitions. The brochure was made available online and mailed to Milwaukee Downtown's database of stakeholders, past festgoers, and friends of the organization.





SANTA, MRS. CLAUS, AND LOCAL ARTIST SARAH FIEREK ADD TO DOWNTOWN'S MERRIMENT

2 Cavalcades With the Clauses

Festivalgoers received a delightful glimpse of Santa and Mrs. Claus aboard the Historic Third Ward's vintage firetruck on two select nights in December.

CHRISTMAS' MOST FAVORITE COUPLE CONTINUE TO CHARM

900+ Participants at Cocoa With The Clauses

Families gathered at Cathedral Square Park to meet Santa and Mrs. Claus. Elves and other holiday characters were available for this annual cocoa klatch supported by Madison Medical Affiliates. More than 250 professional portraits were taken of families. Free hot cocoa and cookies were provided (750 of each!), and over 475 goodie bags were distributed to kids.

SOLD-OUT NEW YEAR'S EVE EVENT SUPPORTS PUBLIC ART

250 Attendees at New End-of-Year Bash

Milwaukee Downtown and Events By Design collaborated on a new event, NYE MKE. Held at the Milwaukee Art Museum, the event featured nonstop entertainment, an open bar, food stations, live art and performances, and more. Proceeds from the event benefitted Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21's upcoming community public art initiatives, including "Lightfield" by HYBYCOZO.



PAID MEDIA REACHED FAMILIES AT HOME, IN THE CAR, AND AT WORK

8.3+ Million Paid Media Impressions

The Festival continued to partner with WISN 12 and 95.7 WRIT as its official media partners. Other print, broadcast and digital outlets were utilized to target women 35 – 64 within a 15-mile radius of downtown.

PUBLIC RELATIONS BUILDS AWARENESS OF THINGS TO DO

\$539,929+ in Earned Media

Throughout the six-week festival, over \$539,929 in earned media coverage and 4.5 million impressions were obtained through broadcast, print, and web outlets.



SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS SOAR AS FAMILIES SEEK WINTER ACTIVITIES

🔔 904,450 Impressions Generated

🔔 2,070 New Followers Gained

🔔 65,256 Social Engagements in the Latinx Communities

Social media is a vital tool for informing consumers of the plethora of things to do downtown. During the Festival, the organic campaign generated over 900,000 impressions!



More information available at www.milwaukeeholidaylights.com. For sponsorship opportunities, contact Rebecca Sue Button at rbutton@milwaukeedowntown.com.