



For Immediate Release:  
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## **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PREPARES FOR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARADE**

The holiday season is quickly approaching and the Elkins-Randolph County Chamber of Commerce is gearing up for the Annual Christmas Parade and Santa Visits.

The parade, scheduled for 7 p.m. December 5<sup>th</sup> in downtown Elkins and features the theme "Destination North Pole."

It will follow a familiar route through town and begin in South Elkins. The parade will end at the Elkins-Randolph YMCA, where activities such as a puppet show, photos with Santa and refreshments as well as craft projects will be available at no charge.

The Chamber encourages area residents to come out and enjoy this annual celebration. Plans for the parade are underway and entries are currently being accepted. Entry forms are available through the Chamber at 304-636-2717. Each year the parade averages 50 entries. This year's main sponsor is Frontier Communications.

Following the success of the Sunset Chase 5k, the Chamber is also adding a 1 mile family fun run, The Merry Mile, to the beginning of the parade. The run will begin prior to the Christmas Parade and participants will receive holiday accessories to wear during the run. The out-and-back course will allow the runners to lead off the parade as Santa prepares to ride down Davis Avenue and make his way to the North Pole. Pre-registration will be available online and at the Chamber office.

There are numerous events that will take place at the conclusion of the parade at the YMCA. The SonShine Puppet Ministry, and ventriloquist Shannon Bennett Campbell will perform.

A Christmas card station was a great success last year and will be available for the children again while they wait to see Santa. Cards that are colored and decorated by the children will be donated to local hospitals and nursing homes, so the joy of the season can be shared with those who are unable to attend the festivities.

Refreshments will be served to the children while they decorate their cards, enjoy the entertainment and make their wish lists to give to Santa.

The Inter-Mountain once again will provide a photographer to take photos with Santa. In order to cut down on wait times, one photo will be taken per family, and there is no charge to receive one printed image. Pictures will be available for pickup at the paper's office or may be mailed upon request. Photo CDs also will be available for a nominal fee.

In addition, parents and children will not have to wait in line this year to see Santa and Mrs. Claus. Rather, they will be given a number and can partake in activities until their number is called.

Classic Christmas movies will play while children look forward to their visit with Santa. Little ones also will be able to give St. Nick their wish list when they come in for their photo.

The Chamber is still accepting volunteers to help with the parade. If interested please contact the Chamber office at 304-636-2717. A rain date has been set for December 12, in the event of inclement weather.