



## GARMA's Holiday Season 2020

Every year GARMA enjoys bringing the holiday spirit to downtown Gettysburg via our many decorations and celebrations. As we know, 2020 has brought forth some interesting challenges as to how we conduct ourselves in large group situations. With that said, we would like to update everyone as to how we will be handling the holiday season from start to finish.

GARMA will continue the tradition of the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony on November 27 (Black Friday) with some alterations to our regular plans. This year's tree lighting will be done virtually. We will live stream the event on our Facebook page, thus encouraging people to stay home and celebrate in warmth with family and friends. This live stream will start at 5:45 pm on the 27<sup>th</sup> and last approximately 25 minutes. During this time we ask families to post pictures on our Facebook page depicting their anticipation of the lighting of the Gettysburg Christmas Tree (**#gettysburgvirtualelighting**). Those who post will win GARMA Gift Certificates that can be spent at over 65 GARMA businesses.

Santa will still come to Gettysburg to light the tree that evening. However, he will not be stopping at his Shanty afterward to greet children and well-wishers. Santa's Shanty will be brought to its regular spot in the ACNB/Open Minds quadrant of the square. Instead of in-person visits with Santa, we will be encouraging children to drop off their letters to Santa that can be deposited in a mail slot on the Shanty (no postage required). Children will receive a double-sided postcard, with a holiday drawing that can be colored, from Santa acknowledging their letters. Santa will make visits to downtown Gettysburg throughout the season to wave and greet the children at a distance.

Gift Certificates will be awarded throughout the holiday season for Facebook posts and other interactive activities, thus encouraging shoppers to spend this "free money" during the holiday season. This new practice is in lieu of our annual \$1000 shopping spree we've done in the past which allowed only one winner to be drawn at the end of the holiday season to spend their "free money".

GARMA has entered into an agreement with the Borough for Free Parking during the holidays. This year will be a bit different. Free parking will be Monday – Thursday from 8am-8pm. Friday – Sunday will be toll parking.

To finish the 2020 holiday season, GARMA has taken over the reins of the Annual New Year's Eve festivities in downtown Gettysburg. This event, previously put on by the Adams County Arts Council, is proving to be an exciting challenge as we social distance ourselves into 2021. As we will not be encouraging a large gathering, we will be looking at an alternate location to have the New Year's Eve Fireworks Display.

As this year has challenged us all in one way or another, we hope that everyone will continue to thrive, stay safe, forge on and look for a brighter new year. We, the board members of GARMA appreciate your support. We strive for the best in 2021.

For information on all GARMA activities visit [www.gettysburgretailmerchants.com](http://www.gettysburgretailmerchants.com).

*Jennie Dillon is the VP of GARMA, Christmas Chairperson, and owner of Artworks on York St.*