

GREENFIELD

# Jinglefest, Amazing Race kick off city's holiday season

By MARY BYRNE  
Staff Writer

GREENFIELD — With an array of festive events lined up starting with Jinglefest and its accompanying Amazing Race, the holiday season is entering full swing in Greenfield.

A weekend filled with holiday activities kicks off Friday at 5 p.m. with the annual tree lighting at Veterans Mall. The lighting will be accompanied by a musical performance by the Twice As Smart youth group and hot chocolate and cider courtesy of the Franklin Community Co-op.

After that, the Greenfield Business Association has a variety of events planned on Saturday, beginning with the opportunity to meet Santa at the Garden Cinemas from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Other events include a free showing of "A Christmas Carol," a social in the Social Room at Franklin County's YMCA, crafts and storytelling with Mrs. Claus at The LAVA Center, and crafts at the Franklin Community Co-op space at 170 Main St.

"We're really kicking off the holiday season," said Greenfield Business Association Director Hannah Rechtschaffen. The Amazing Race: Jinglefest Edition, organized by the Greenfield Recreation Department, will also take place on Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m.

"[Last year] was the first time we created [The Amazing Race] as part of Jinglefest," said Recreation Director Christy Moore, explaining the game — based on the CBS TV series, "The Amazing Race" — was an activity at the

Winter Carnival's 100th anniversary in 2022. "We thought it would be nice to expand to Jinglefest. It's super fun, it's very creative and it's an opportunity to get downtown businesses involved with the Recreation Department, which is always really special."

Ten teams have signed up for the "race," which involves teams reading clues or completing tasks before moving onto a new location, according to Moore. As of Wednesday, there were still five spaces left for teams to register. It is free to participate. Teams can register online at [tinyurl.com/AmazingRaceRec](http://tinyurl.com/AmazingRaceRec).

Moore added that with the 102nd annual Winter Carnival coming up in February, the Recreation Department is "ready to welcome any kind of sponsorship and donations" as it begins to book activities.

On Sunday, there will be a youth holiday crafts and art market at Innovintage Place (76 Hope St.) and Dawn's School of Dance (88 Hope St.) from noon to 4 p.m., and an artists reception for Karen Axtell at the Franklin Community Co-op's 170 Main St. space.

For a full lineup of Jinglefest activities, visit [visitgreenfieldma.com/event/greenfield-jinglefest-2023](http://visitgreenfieldma.com/event/greenfield-jinglefest-2023).

### Future weekends

Throughout the community, businesses will be offering different discounts and specials, or activities, such as raffles. Rechtschaffen noted that Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center plans to hold its annual Greenfield Holiday



Singers don festive Santa hats at Veterans Mall in Greenfield following the annual tree lighting. This year's tree lighting is set for Friday at 5 p.m.

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Pop-Up Market across the street at the Pushkin Gallery, 4 Federal St., from Friday, Dec. 8, from 4 to 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 9, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 10, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be more than 30 vendors, likely live music and possibly other performances.

"That's two weeks in a row that you can come downtown and shop and do fun things," Rechtschaffen said. "We're hoping people will come down all winter long. Jinglefest is meant to be a kick off the holiday season."

### Free holiday parking

To encourage visitors this holiday season, the city announced that parking will be free beginning Friday and continuing through Dec. 26.

Permits will still be required for permit-only parking spaces, and parking fees will remain in effect for the Olive Street Parking Garage and for on-street metered parking. As always, metered parking is free on Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays.

"There is so much to do in downtown Greenfield during the holiday season, from shopping to dining to entertainment," said Mayor Roxann

Wedegartner in a statement. "We hope free parking in our municipal lots will encourage people to come downtown to see all we have to offer."

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Santa visits with children at a previous Jinglefest in Greenfield.

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