



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 4, 2011

CONTACT: Karen Eylon, (614) 270-3277 (mobile) or Patty Donahey Geiger, (614) 325-6178
director@visitgahanna.com patty@pdgcommunications.com

HOLIDAY LIGHTS! TO SHINE AGAIN
“Take a Bite for Holiday Lights!” Kicks Off Efforts to Fund the Parade
Eat Out In August in Gahanna

GAHANNA, Ohio – Exciting news - the *Holiday Lights! Parade* is back! The traditional parade will once again brighten the *Holiday Lights! Season*, Nov. 12, 2011, through Jan. 2, 2012, in Gahanna.

Last year the parade was put on hold because of increased expenses but this year a variety of fundraising initiatives and sponsorship opportunities will help pay for the parade and City services. “Take a Bite for Holiday Lights,” a partnership with select Gahanna restaurants, will launch fundraising efforts for the event.

“Throughout this past year, the Gahanna community has expressed what an important holiday tradition the parade has been to them since 1999,” said Beverly Metcalf, Holiday Lights! Parade Chair and owner of Metcalf Design & Printing Center. “Some of these folks have literally grown up with the parade and they felt the holiday season just wasn’t the same without it.”

“Take a Bite for Holiday Lights!” is an easy, fun way for residents to help support the return of their treasured holiday parade. The fundraising concept is not new, but new for *Holiday Lights!* Partnering with select restaurant owners in Gahanna, the committee and the Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau have coordinated opportunities for parade supporters to dine at eateries during specified times, and a portion of the proceeds generated will be donated to help offset parade expenses and City services.

Here’s how it works: The diner brings a “Take a Bite for Holiday Lights!” flyer to one of the participating restaurants and presents it before ordering. There are two types of flyers, one is general and one is restaurant specific, depending on the restaurant’s requirements. Complete details are available and flyers can be downloaded at visitgahanna.com.

--more--

HOLIDAY LIGHTS! TO SHINE AGAIN—Page 2

The *Holiday Lights! Season* presented by gridSMART® from AEP Ohio will officially open in Gahanna on Saturday, Nov. 12, 2011, and will run through Jan. 2, 2012. The Holiday Lights schedule of festivities currently includes the following:

November 1 until 11	Entries for the “Flip the Switch” coloring contest presented by gridSMART® from AEP Ohio are accepted.
Friday, November 11	Winning “Flip the Switch” contest winners notified.
Saturday, November 12 6 p.m.	(Second Saturday) Illumination of the Grand Tree and Winter Wonderland at Creekside Park, presented by gridSMART® from AEP Ohio and the City of Gahanna Department of Parks & Recreation. The Holiday Village will return with a new addition, a grist mill. Mayor Becky Stinchcomb will officiate and the winners of the “Flip the Switch” contest will assist her with the lighting ceremony.
Friday, November 25 4 - 8 p.m. 4 – 7:30 p.m. 5 p.m. 6 p.m.	Festival food vendors Olde Gahanna Community Partnership Festival of Trees Healthy Holiday Fun Run, presented by Mount Carmel Holiday Lights Parade
Saturday, December 10 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.	(Second Saturday) Holiday Story Time Character Breakfast at Olde Gahanna Sanctuary Free Children’s Activities at Olde Gahanna Sanctuary

Additional offerings will be added as the event approaches, such as Visit with Santa, Santa’s Secret Gift Shop, specials, promotions and holiday offerings from Gahanna businesses and more!

Don’t miss the exciting kickoff to the magical holiday season with the *Holiday Lights!* For additional information, visit www.visitgahanna.com or call (614) 418-9114. For interviews with *Holiday Lights! Parade* supporters, please contact:

- Beverly Metcalf, Parade Chair and Owner of Metcalf Design & Printing Center at (614) 475-4571 or bevmetcalf@metcalfprinting.com
- Gretchen Hof, Events Coordinator, Gahanna CVB at (614) 418-9114 or ghoff@visitgahanna.com

###

The Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau (GCVB) is a 501(c) (6) non-profit organization funded by a local hotel tax and partner support whose mission is to promote Gahanna as a vibrant destination by connecting the people and places of our community which contributes to economic prosperity. The GCVB annually presents the Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival and Holiday Lights! Season. We are grateful for the support given to Holiday Lights by the event sponsors listed on our Web site: www.visitgahanna.com.

###

