



## The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival® Celebrates Holiday Tradition With A Sparkling Holiday Celebration And Parade on November 18

Grand Parade Marshals Mickey Mouse And Minnie Mouse From Walt Disney World® Resort Magically Illuminate One Million Lights On 200 Trees During The Largest Evening Parade In America

Chicago, IL, Nov 07, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival®, in its 32nd year of being produced by The Magnificent Mile Association, draws together generations of families who begin each holiday season with festive, family-friendly activities and the largest evening parade in America. On Saturday, Nov. 18, smiles will brighten as Grand Marshals Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse from Walt Disney World Resort® magically illuminate one million lights on 200 trees adorning Chicago's Michigan Avenue. The star-studded parade includes legendary and contemporary musical artists, delightful helium balloons, world-class entertainment and favorite mascots, luminous floats, and Santa Claus, who soars in his sleigh down The Magnificent Mile to welcome the holiday season before an incredible fireworks finale.

The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival parade-goers are invited for the first time to don outrageously festive sweaters to attempt to set a record for the most holiday sweaters at a parade.

"Our attempt to set this festive sweater record adds a new layer of holiday spirit to a tradition that The Magnificent Mile Association has produced for 32 years," says Kimberly Bares, President and CEO, The Magnificent Mile Association. "We are grateful for the tremendous support of our sponsors Wintrust, Enjoy Illinois, Dunkin' and AT&T, and our 600 volunteers for helping to create a magical experience for hundreds of thousands of parade-goers from around the globe."

Quick Look: The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival Schedule Saturday, Nov. 18:  
11 a.m. – 4 p.m. – Lights Festival Lane (401 N. Michigan Ave.); 4 – 7 p.m. – Be counted for the sweater record attempt along the parade route; 5:30 p.m. – The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival Parade Steps Off – (Oak St. & Michigan Ave. south to

Wacker Dr.); 7 p.m. – The Wintrust Fireworks Spectacular (Chicago River and Wacker Dr.)

On Saturday, November 18 from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m., Lights Festival Lane is alive with free activities including Wintrust Photos with Santa, complimentary cheesecake (and decorating!) with Eli's Cheesecake Company, samples of new holiday coffee flavors from Dunkin', Sloomoo slime with Sloomoo the Mascot, CN Railway's Rail Safety Prize Wheel with mascot Milo, lottery tickets and holiday photos with Illinois Lottery, pop-up musical and special performances including The Noggeler Carnival Band from Chicago's Sister City Lucerne, Switzerland, NASCAR Chicago Street Race's Racing Simulator, free samples of Lifeway Kefir and many additional interactive surprises throughout the day.

At 5:30 p.m. Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse from Walt Disney World Resort® step off at Oak Street and travel down Michigan Avenue to Wacker Drive. They are joined in the 2023 parade by Goofy, Pluto, Chip, Dale and Mirabel from Encanto.

Fans will be entertained by musical superstars including Grammy-nominated Sister Sledge, The Sugarhill Gang, The Funky Bunch, Katie Kadan, and American Idol finalist Colin Stough. The rousing parade also features the Petoskey Steel Drum Band plus impressive marching bands Newton High School Marching Eagles (Jasper County, IL), Cullman High School Bearcat Band (Cullman, AL), and Cuyahoga Falls Marching Tiger Band (Cuyahoga Falls, OH) who will energize crowds. Special guests along the parade route will also include Wintrust's favorite mascots celebrating with the Crystal Lake Strikers Drumline, the Swiss Noggeler Carnival Band, and The Cirque Experience/Wheel Jam.

The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival draws an international audience through global influencers and media from around the world invited to the parade by Choose Chicago. This year, DJ Chip E, the godfather of House music, will entertain aboard their festive double-decker bus.

Helium balloons fly high overhead including Rudolph presented by the athletes of Special Olympics Illinois, a giant festive gift package from Water Tower Place, and the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital balloon. Santa Claus will soar down the route with lots of cheer on Wintrust's grand finale float to officially usher in the start of the holiday season. The Wintrust Fireworks Spectacular delivers a thrilling finale at 7 p.m. over the Chicago River at Michigan Avenue.

ABC 7 will capture all the magic of this anticipated holiday event with an hour-long special, Sunday, November 19 at 6 PM on ABC 7. Hosted by ABC 7's Cheryl Burton, Ryan Chiaverini, Judy Hsu and Hosea Sanders, the special will showcase Latin Jazz family legend, Tito Puente Jr., entertaining atop the iconic Wrigley Building. Performances by Broadway in Chicago's Tony Award-winning "Hamilton" celebrating its return to Chicago and "Boop! The Musical," a new Broadway bound extravaganza, Sister Sledge and The Sugar Hill Gang, among others, will also be featured. The special will be streamed on [abc7chicago.com](http://abc7chicago.com) and available to delight national audiences throughout the season.

For a complete schedule of events, holiday offers from area businesses, and ways to participate as we attempt to set a record for the most holiday sweaters at a parade, visit [TheMagnificentMile.com](http://TheMagnificentMile.com); and follow The Magnificent Mile on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

### **About The Magnificent Mile®**

The Magnificent Mile® is Chicago's premier destination, offering leading retailers, diverse restaurants and hotels, unique museums and entertaining attractions to more than 20 million visitors each year. As one of the Great Avenues of the World®, The Magnificent Mile district features extraordinary shopping, critically acclaimed dining, world-class hotel accommodations, seasonal event campaigns and exceptional urban landscaping with more than 52 separate parkway gardens that reflect the changing seasons and complement the unique architectural beauty of Chicago. For more information, visit [TheMagnificentMile.com](http://TheMagnificentMile.com) or follow The Magnificent Mile on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

### **About Wintrust**

Wintrust is a financial holding company with assets over \$55 billion whose common stock is traded on the Nasdaq Global Select Market. Built on the "HAVE IT ALL" model, Wintrust offers sophisticated technology and resources of a large bank while focusing on providing service-based community banking to each and every customer. Wintrust operates fifteen community bank subsidiaries, with over 170 banking locations located in the greater Chicago and southern Wisconsin market areas. Additionally, Wintrust operates various non-bank business units including business units which provide commercial and life insurance premium financing in the United States, a premium finance company operating in Canada, a company providing short-term accounts receivable financing and value-added out-sourced administrative services to the temporary staffing services industry, a business unit engaging primarily in the origination and purchase of residential mortgages for sale into the secondary market

throughout the United States, and companies providing wealth management services and qualified intermediary services for tax-deferred exchanges.

### **About Walt Disney World® Resort**

Walt Disney World Resort, The Most Magical Place on Earth, is a contiguous, nearly 40-square-mile, world-class entertainment and recreation destination featuring four theme parks (Magic Kingdom Park, EPCOT, Disney's Hollywood Studios and Disney's Animal Kingdom Theme Park); two water adventure parks (Disney's Blizzard Beach Water Park and Disney's Typhoon Lagoon Water Park); more than 25 resort hotels; 63 holes of golf on four championship courses; two full-service spas; Disney's Wedding Pavilion; ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex; and Disney Springs, a shopping-dining-entertainment complex. Located in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., 20 miles southwest of Orlando, Walt Disney World Resort opened Oct. 1, 1971.

### **About The Magnificent Mile Association**

Organizer of The Wintrust Magnificent Mile Lights Festival®, The Magnificent Mile Association is a private, non-profit membership organization with a mission of preserving, promoting, and enhancing one of Chicago's most unique neighborhoods. The organization represents 700 members including retailers; hotels; restaurants; popular attractions; and commercial, institutional and residential properties. For more information, visit [www.themagnificentmileassociation.com](http://www.themagnificentmileassociation.com).

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