



*Celebration of Lights Inc.*  
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September 14, 2017

Dear Interested Supporter,

The Celebration of Lights is a not-for-profit volunteer community organization that puts on a Christmas Lighting display for our community every year. This tradition in Sarnia has taken place in our community now for 33 years consecutively and is totally dependent on donations and support from our local community. We receive no government funding, is not put on by the city or county but is a group of volunteers who keep this tradition going with 100% support from within this community.

As many of you may be aware this event has had a few tough years raising donations, previous supporters had left the area or were not doing well financially and no new support had been located to fill the voids created by this. The community support that came forward during 2016 when it looked like this event may be done was overwhelming and re-invigorated the Celebration of Lights with this support that came forward from our community to keep this event going. 2016 went from a very dark year into one of the best events ever put on in the park.

As we prepare for the 2017 event we again need the support of the community to keep this event alive. We are looking at having an even better event for this year but this all takes the support of the community to make it happen. We would really like to return all of the events from previous years and even grow the event if the support is there.

We plan to continue on with the "display adoption" initiative we began in 2016, the results of this were outstanding, with more displays in much better condition set up in record time with so much support was very encouraging and created a great community effort and a great experience for everyone. We only have a few opportunities remaining with existing displays for this "display adoption" but are eager to hear new ideas, embrace potential new displays and hopefully have turned the corner and moved into a growing event again that we can all be proud of.

Some exciting news for 2017, the road arch that spans Front St has been going through a major re-vitalization thanks to some very dedicated volunteers and organizations within our great community. The return of this iconic display is very highly anticipated and has been missed greatly over the last few years. Fingers crossed we are ready in time, this project has been immense and we are very grateful to those in our community who have done so much to return this icon!

Centennial Park is fully open again with the city parks department working on the finishing touches as I write this. We are excited to have the full park back and be able to spread the displays throughout the entire park.

We are working with local schools to also bring back some of our favorite memories of what the Celebration of Lights used to be. We are going to try to enhance a project started last year of having the community schools create decorations and decorate the tree's in the park so they have something to be proud of and feel part of it all. Others

we are working with to bring back some of the plywood Christmas scene cut outs which have been missing for many years. This involvement of our schools and children is essential to what our event means to our community and we are working hard to try to bring these things back and restore these critical elements of our community event.

We plan to return our full opening ceremony activities this year, and with enough support from the community plan to enhance them. We are also changing our opening ceremony event to a Saturday, November 25th for 2017. We are hopeful this change will allow more families to participate and allow more people to attend the park for this traditional kick off to the holiday season. We plan to enhance things starting earlier, at 4 PM this year with children's activities and entertainers, then starting the horse and trolley rides earlier and adding a second one since this has been always so popular and then moving into the traditional opening ceremonies, band, turning on of the lights and followed up by a fireworks display over Sarnia Bay.

We have some big ambitions and ideas to create an even bigger event, but we need your support to do this. The following are just a few things we are currently looking for support with:

#### Sponsors Needed

Horse and Trolley Rides

Event Tent

Fireworks

Face Painters

Children's Entertainers

Stage Equipment for Opening

We have some big ambitions for this year, but what we can do will ultimately be decided with what donation we can generate for these things. We would love to create a larger event but can only do what we have support to do. We are more than happy to work with community organizations to ensure they receive the recognition they so greatly deserve for their support in these events.

Beyond these activities it takes quite a bit of support to keep this event going, behind the scenes expenses such as insurance, repairs and maintenance also add up significantly every year to keep this event going. Every little bit helps, no matter the amount, us all as a community working together is what makes this event a reality and keeps it going.

Please consider supporting this event to keep this tradition going on for many more generations to come. If you need more details, have questions, or just want to know more, do not hesitate to contact us. We can be reached at email at top of letter or email me directly at [bsuisham@yahoo.com](mailto:bsuisham@yahoo.com). If you would like someone to call you just forward your name number and a good time to contact you and we will be sure to be in touch. Donations can be mailed to our address also at the top of this letter.

Thank you for your time and support in keeping this event alive and growing!

Yours very truly;

Bill Suisham

Chairman - Celebration of Lights