

12-1-14

Press Release - For Immediate Release
Bishop Hill, IL

Lucia Nights in Bishop Hill

Bishop Hill invites you to join in the Lucia Nights celebration on Friday December 12 and Saturday December 13 from 6 to 9 p.m. This Swedish tradition is based on a legend of Saint Lucia, Queen of Light. During a famine in Sweden, on the longest and darkest night of the year, Lucia appeared wearing a long white robe and encircling her head was a crown of candles. Legend has it that Lucia appeared on a ship laden with food. When the ship was unloaded, both it and Lucia vanished. Girls today wake their families on December 13th carrying a tray of Lucia buns while dressed in a white robe and wearing a crown of candles.

Lucia Nights begins with the **Lighting of the Park Christmas tree** at 6 p.m. on Friday, December 12. The public is invited to bring edible ornaments to hang on the tree. Attractions include free musical performances in various locations in town. Businesses and museums will have a Lucia girl serving cookies. Around the village, each building will have a single candle in each window, and sidewalks will be illuminated. Special Christmas gifts will also be on sale.

On both Friday and Saturday evenings, Bishop Hill will be hosting a wide range of activities. The **Peoria Cooperative Academy Chorale** will be performing in VagnHall Galleri at 6 p.m., with the **Mountain Men** following at 7 p.m. In the Welcome Center from 6 to 9 p.m., storyteller **Brian "Fox" Ellis** will be sharing traditional Swedish and Pioneer Christmas stories, mixed with a sing-a-long of many of your favorite carols. At the Steeple Building, **Hammer and Pick** will be playing from 6 to 9 p.m., with woodcarving demonstrations going on as well. In addition, the Bishop Hill Community United Methodist Church will host the annual **Soup and Chili Supper** beginning at 4:00 p.m. until they run out. A free-will donation is appreciated to cover the cost of the meal.

On Saturday, December 13 only, there will be an **Old Fashioned Barn Dance** at the Colony School beginning at 7 p.m. **The Rusty Pickup String Band** will be performing. All dances taught and called by Gail Hintze and Jim Hicks. Admission is \$5 per person, and beginners are welcome. No partner is necessary.

Bishop Hill is located 150 miles southwest of Chicago and 20 miles east of I-74 in Henry County. For more information please call 309-927-3899 or visit www.bishophill.com.

*Lucia Nights is sponsored, in part, by the *Illinois Arts Council*, a State Agency, and the Quad City Arts.

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5 labeled photographs are attached; courtesy of Lou Lourdeau