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USTER COUNTRY CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS

From Billings to Broadus, Laurel to Miles City, Custer Country celebrates the Holiday Season with Christmas strolls, carolers, fireworks, and hayrides from November 30th to December 6th.

“Southeastern Montana welcomes everyone home for the Holidays with tree festivals, Christmas lighting displays, parades, fireworks, and for those who need to deliver their gift wish list directly to the man in charge, Santa Claus will be everywhere,” said Custer Country President Rose Emily Longan.

Billings opens the weekend with the **21st Annual Festival of Trees**, where more than forty festively decorated trees will be on display for viewing and purchase. Santa’s Workshop, a holiday boutique, and craft fair add to the fun. All proceeds benefit The Family Tree Center, Billings Council to Prevent Child Abuse. The Festival of Trees begins at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, November 30th with an auction party. Tickets for the auction party, which offers hors d’oeuvres and a silent auction of gift baskets and angel items, are \$50. Trees can be viewed from 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Friday, December 1st; 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturday, December 2nd; and from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 3rd. For more information, call the Family Tree at 406-252-9799.

The Downtown Billings Association presents its annual **Billings Christmas Stroll** with hayrides, visits from Santa, seasonal food and gift items, and merchant specials from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Friday, December 1st; a good place to begin is under Skypoint at 2nd and North Broadway in Downtown Billings. More info, call the DBA at 406-259-5454.

In conjunction with the Christmas Stroll, Billings will host **Artwalk Downtown!** from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m., Friday, December 1st. Seventeen galleries feature contemporary art, Western pieces, sculpture, ceramics, metalwork and much more. Self-guided maps are available at each gallery; by visiting ten of the seventeen galleries and having your tour map stamped, visitors are eligible for door prizes. Stops must include Gallery 15 North at Q’s and Flatiron Gallery to be eligible for the grand prize gift certificate to the Rex Restaurant. More info, contact McIntosh Art at 406-252-2010.

Miles City’s Holiday Stroll, from 5 to 9:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 2nd, celebrates with horse-drawn wagon rides, hayrides, and shopping along the streets of the city. Vendors offer delights like Scottish Eggs and roasted chestnuts. More info, call the Miles City Chamber of Commerce, 406-234-2890.

Laurel’s Christmas To Remember is set for Sunday, December 3rd, beginning with a community bazaar at Grace Bible Church from 1 to 6:00 p.m. Laurel merchants offer open houses for

holiday shoppers, children can have their picture taken with Santa at Rock Creek Books, and everyone can have their photo taken with their pets at Main Street EFX Photography. The Laurel Chamber will host an open house featuring a sing-along around the player piano from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. A live Nativity Scene is featured in the Town Square from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. The Christmas Parade begins downtown at 5:00 p.m., when the businesses will light up one at a time until all of Laurel brightens with glowing lights and decorations. A colorful fireworks display follows the conclusion of the parade. For more information, call the Laurel Chamber at 406-628-8105.

Laurel will be ablaze from December 3rd to January 1st with brightly twinkling Christmas lights and festive decorations during its annual **Christmas Lighting Display Contests** for homes and businesses, which are judged on theme, creativity, and originality. Maps with a route to drive past these decorations are available at local stores, restaurants, banks and the Chamber of Commerce. For more info, contact the Laurel Chamber at 406-628-8105.

Broadus celebrates Christmas with Santa Claus leading the annual **Parade of Lights** at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 6th. Events include a live Nativity Scene, food around the square, and a fireworks display after the parade. From 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., local merchants will offer festive treats, special holiday shopping prices, and plenty of hot chocolate and marshmallows to keep everyone warm. For more info, contact the Broadus Chamber of Commerce at 406-436-2811

Working with Travel Montana, Custer Country serves thirteen counties: Big Horn, Carter, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Powder River, Prairie, Rosebud, Treasure, Wibaux, and Yellowstone, as well as the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Reservations.

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