

News

Shopping hours extended

Sales, giveaways planned for Thursday Nights on the Town

Thursday, December 4, 2008 6:08 AM EST

By Catherine Kavanaugh, Daily Tribune Staff Writer

ROYAL OAK — Naughty or nice won't matter to Santa during Thursday Nights on the Town. Luck will determine which late-hour shoppers get the local gift certificates from the jolly old elf.

The Downtown Development Authority is ringing in the holidays with 40 businesses staying open until 9 p.m. today, Dec. 11 and Dec. 18; random presents from Santa and Mrs. Claus; strolling musicians and free gift wrapping.

"We've added a lot of fun things for shoppers this year," downtown manager Stephanie McIntyre said.

The promotional event coincides today with the city's 27th annual tree-lighting ceremony, which starts at 4 p.m. with a holiday bazaar at Royal Oak Farmers Market followed by caroling, Santa's arrival and the tree festivities at 6 p.m. The tree lighting is a tradition for hundreds of families every year.

"There's good reason for everyone to stay downtown," McIntyre said.

At 7 p.m., Shrine High School will provide the entertainment for Thursday Nights on the Town and merchants will have sales and giveaways for shoppers looking for that perfect gift.

Pam McLenon and Marianne Petrus opened Bohemian Rhapsody, 110 W. Fourth St., three weeks ago. They carry an eclectic mix of colorful home accessories, furniture, jewelry and their own line of makeup. McLenon describes their inventory as ethnic and '70s inspired.

"The store is brighter than most people's eye palettes," she said.

She expects pillows covered in rock 'n' roll T-shirts and needlepoint designs to be popular with gift givers. Prices range from \$45 for Nirvana and The Clash pillows to \$150 for intricate needlepoint patterns. The store has a wide array of items from friendship bracelets for \$1.50 to a vintage-style couch upholstered with modern fabric for \$2,400.

The Annex, 739 S. Washington Ave., also is a recent addition to the downtown. Owners Annie LeBlanc and Doug Schwartz opened the high-end boutique in July and fill it with home decor and accessories for men and women.

"We travel everywhere and bring back one-of-a-kind things you won't see on anyone else," said Schwartz, adding Los Angeles designers are their favorites.

"I know everyone says they are different, but I promise we really are."

He has stocked up on cashmere scarves for men and women — the ones by Chan Luu are priced at \$190 — as well as fedoras and newsboy caps that cost \$45 to \$200. Cashmere skull caps for women are a hot seller at \$200, he added.

"We can't keep them in here," Schwartz said.

The Annex is hosting a private party for the Michigan Parkinson Foundation tonight, but it will be open until 9 p.m. Dec. 11 and 18. Shoppers will get \$20 off a \$100 purchase, \$50 off a \$250 purchase, and \$75 off a \$500 purchase.

Everyone who buys a \$100 gift card from 5th & Fringe Salon & Spa will get a \$20 spa gift card for themselves during Thursday Nights on the Town.

At Mongolian BBQ, shoppers can get free hot chocolate. Students with valid identification will get 25 percent off purchases at the Salvation Army. And, Hermann's Bakery will roll out 30 kinds of made-from-scratch Christmas cookies and hand-dipped chocolates.

Other business staying open late on Thursdays include Antiques on Main, Incognito, It's Your Window, Metals in Time, Noir Leather, and Shine and Write Impressions.

Contact Catherine Kavanaugh at cathy.kavanaugh@dailytribune.com or (248) 591-2504.

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