

STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF GENERAL SERVICES
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**OGS AND SEFCU CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAY
SEASON WITH TREE LIGHTING & FIREWORKS FESTIVAL**

SEFCU and the New York State Office of General Services (OGS) will kick-off the 2009 holiday season at the SEFCU Holiday Tree Lighting and Fireworks Festival, Sunday, December 6, from 1– 6 p.m. at the Empire State Plaza. An annual family tradition in the Capital District, the event will be capped off by a spectacular fireworks show created by Alonzo Fireworks Display, Inc.

"The annual Tree Lighting and Fireworks Festival is an excellent way to kick-off the holidays, inviting us to celebrate this season of peace and service as a community," Governor David A. Paterson said. "We appreciate these festivities, especially now—a time when many families must face the challenges of a difficult economy. I applaud SEFCU and all the sponsors who committed to making it a success. On behalf of the Paterson family, I wish all the participants a very happy holiday."

"Once again, SEFCU and the other generous sponsors have stepped forward to provide financial support for this year's tree lighting. Without their support this event would not be possible," Commissioner Egan said. "Even during challenging economic times, OGS strives to offer family events to the public, free and close to home."

"On behalf of everyone at SEFCU, we are pleased to partner once again with OGS on the annual Holiday Tree Lighting and Fireworks Festival," said Michael J. Castellana, SEFCU's President and CEO. "During the holiday season, it's a wonderful time to reflect on all we have to be thankful for and try to help those who are less fortunate."

The day's activities begin at 1 p.m. on the Concourse of the Empire State Plaza. Events include a special holiday marketplace featuring seasonal gifts, visits with Santa Claus, live music and storytelling by *Tales 'n Tunes*, and a children's card making workshop. Also performing traditional Christmas carols will be *Tuba Christmas*, an ensemble of more than 50 musicians paying tribute to the tuba and teachings of the late William J. Bell, born on Christmas Day in 1902.

The donation of New York State's holiday trees is truly a time-honored tradition. Each year, OGS receives hundreds of offers for tree donations from generous New Yorkers and conducts many site visits before making a final selection.

The Empire State Plaza Holiday Tree is a 40-foot blue spruce tree donated by Karyne Golden of Schenectady. The Holiday Tree placed in East Capitol Park is a 35-foot blue spruce, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Fiacco of Mechanicville.

The energy-saving LED lights for the holiday trees have been provided by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). The lights are constructed from solid-state chips that convert electricity into light without using a filament or glass bulb. LED lights can burn for up to 100,000 hours, enough to last through many more holiday seasons.

Make the Plaza your destination for an afternoon of entertainment and visit other events taking place, including:

-*The Sippy Cups* with a free concert performance at The Egg at 3 p.m. as part of the Family Wonders series at The Empire State Plaza. Admission to the concert is free of charge; however, tickets are necessary and will be available beginning at 2 p.m. at The Egg box office in the Empire State Plaza.

-The Chocolate Expo and Holiday Gift Market in the New York State Museum. The Expo runs from 11 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and features some of the finest chocolates, desserts and specialty foods the region has to offer.

-The Great Train Extravaganza in the Empire State Plaza's Convention Center from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, children under 12 are free. This unique event, hosted by the Upstate Train Associates, features actual operating model O and HO gauge trains, and layouts and displays with more than 300 tables of model trains, train parts, books and related merchandise for sale.

OGS would like to offer a special thank you to the 2009 Holiday Tree Lighting and Fireworks Festival partners: SEFCU, National Grid, New York State Lottery, WTEN, Times Union, Magic 100.9, Verizon and Alonzo Fireworks.

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SEFCU HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING AND FIREWORKS FESTIVAL LINE-UP

Schedule of Events

INDOOR EVENTS

Meeting Rooms 6 and Concourse

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| 1 p.m. – 6 p.m. | Holiday Marketplace—Gift items for sale including holiday wreaths, jewelry, fleece clothing, leather goods and more. |
| 1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. | Holiday Arts and Crafts for Kids |
| 1:30, 2:30 & 3:30 p.m. | <i>Tales 'n Tunes</i> “Holly Jolly Holiday: Songs & Stories” |
| 2 p.m. & 3 p.m. | Meet and greet Santa Claus
Performances by the Hoosick Falls Central Schools Senior Choir |
| 4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. | TUBACHRISTMAS |

ON THE PLAZA

Empire State Plaza, north end near Capitol

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| 4:30 p.m. | Hoosick Falls Central Schools Senior Choir |
| 5:00 p.m. | TUBACHRISTMAS |
| 5:15 p.m. | Official Program featuring WTEN’s Lydia Kulbida and Elisa Streeter, Magic 100.9 , and national anthem performance by the Hoosick Falls Central Schools Senior Choir |
| 5:30 p.m. | Lighting of the Holiday Trees & Fireworks by Alonzo |
| 6:00 p.m. | Program concludes |

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