



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE COUNTRY'S FAVORITE EVENING HOLIDAY CELEBRATION BRIGHTENS UP THE SEASON FOR MILLIONS

*The nationally-broadcast Magnificent Mile Lights Festival® presented by BMO Harris Bank celebrates its 20th anniversary on Saturday, November 19 with top musical performances, favorite characters from **Walt Disney World®** Resort in Florida, family-friendly activities and special holiday offers*

CHICAGO – Chicago's Magnificent Mile Lights Festival® presented by BMO Harris Bank, the country's largest evening holiday celebration, will ring in the 2011 holiday season for the nation on Saturday, November 19 with a "bigger, better and brighter" schedule of events. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the beloved holiday tradition.

One million people from around the country will travel to Chicago to experience a weekend of nonstop holiday offerings that lead up to a magical evening procession featuring more than 40 magnificent floats, helium-filled balloons, classic characters from **Walt Disney World®** Resort in Florida, lively marching bands and musical performances from top artists. Grand marshals Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse from the **Walt Disney World®** Resort will appear together on the lead parade vehicle for the second year in a row to illuminate one million lights on 200 trees along Michigan Avenue, One of the Great Avenues of the World.

The nationally-televised event will be broadcast on Saturday, November 19 from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. CST in local markets on ABC 7 Chicago and in more than 65 markets around the country throughout the holiday season. Broadcast times are available in local listings.

Star appearances include star of Disney Channel's hit series "A.N.T. Farm" and Hollywood Records recording artist China Anne McClain, along with her sisters Lauryn McClain and Sierra McClain; My Block/Columbia Records multi-Grammy Award-winning inspirational recording act Mary Mary; American Idol finalists Haley Reinhart and Casey Abrams; cast members of the Disney Channel Original Movie "Lemonade Mouth;" Jake and the Never Land Pirate Band as seen on Disney Junior; Radio Disney's N.B.T. (Next Big Thing) artist Shealeigh from Chicago;

Justin Roberts and the Not Ready for Naptime Players; Disney Music Group Artist Nathan Pacheco; and more.

The holiday celebration also includes:

- A full lineup of live musical performances on the BMO Harris Bank Stage in Pioneer Court from 11 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. CST (*401 N. Michigan Avenue*);
- “Lights Festival Lane,” an interactive, holiday wonderland featuring booths from BMO Harris Bank, Eli’s Cheescake, DePaul University, Radio Disney/AM 1300, Chevy, John Hancock Observatory, The Museum of Science and Industry, DoubleTree by Hilton Chicago Magnificent Mile and more (*401 N. Michigan Avenue*);
- A treasure hunt from BMO Harris Bank offering families great prizes and more information about BMO Harris Bank’s new “Helpful Steps for Parents,” a program designed to help parents get a jump start on saving for their children’s futures. Hubert the Lion will also be available for pictures;
- The procession, starting at 5:30 p.m. CST, features a spectacular collection of floats from favorites including:
 - Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck and Daisy Duck as well as favorite characters from **Walt Disney World**® Resort in Florida will add excitement to the procession;
 - Santa Claus will greet children of all ages as he flies over the John Hancock Center on his sleigh;
 - Harry Caray’s Restaurant Group will honor the city’s renowned sports culture with baseball great Ernie Banks, Dutchie Caray and other sports legends;
 - Garrett Popcorn Shops will provide samples of their world-famous popcorn along the procession route as it is freshly popped on their float;
 - Candyality, “Chicago’s sweetest destination,” will showcase a candy-inspired holiday wonderland featuring more than 10,000 lights and a truckload of candy;
 - The Chicago Flower & Garden Show (March 10 – 18) will provide a glimpse into the warmer seasons with their “Spring Experience” procession float, a “spring globe” infused with the colors, style and inspiration of “Hort Couture.”
- Larger-than-life helium-filled balloons including Kermit the Frog sponsored by Disney’s “The Muppets,” a famous red-nosed reindeer and more;
- Performances from local marching bands including Crystal Lake Strikers Drum-Line, Morton West High School Band; Loyola Academy High School Band and Proviso East High School Band as well as the Spring-Ford High School Band from Royersford, PA;

- The stunning Fireworks Spectacular over the Chicago River, created from more than 10,000 handmade fireworks shells from Lumina, will serve as the grand finale of the beloved holiday event at approximately 6:55 p.m. CST;
- Seasonal offers from participating businesses in The Magnificent Mile district including holiday hotel packages, shopping perks, dining specials and more.

For a complete list of offers and activities, visit www.themagnificentmile.com or follow The Magnificent Mile on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [foursquare](#).

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About The Magnificent Mile®

The Magnificent Mile® is Chicago's premier destination, offering over 3.3 million square feet of retail space, 460 stores, 275 restaurants, 23,000 hotel rooms in 60 hotels, five unique museums and entertaining attractions to more than 18 million visitors each year. The Magnificent Mile district features world renowned shopping, dining and hotel accommodations, seasonal event campaigns and exceptional urban landscaping with more than 52 unique parkway gardens that reflect the changing seasons and complement the unique architectural beauty of Chicago. As One of The Great Avenues of the World, The Magnificent Mile generates \$1.9 billion in annual retail activity alone. For more information, visit www.themagnificentmile.com.

About BMO Harris Bank

Based in Chicago, BMO Harris Bank has approximately 700 branches and approximately 1,350 ATMs in Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Nevada, Arizona and Florida. Member FDIC. BMO Harris Bank is part of BMO Financial Group, a North American financial organization with 1,600 branches, and a retail deposit base of approximately \$180 billion. For more information, visit www.harrisbank.com.

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