

Blackberry Farm Holiday Express lights up December weekends

'Special Needs Night' kicks off holiday season on Dec. 2

The Holiday Express train is welcoming all aboard during the first three weekends in December at Blackberry Farm for its Yuletide celebration, with thousands of glittering lights, festive activities and the jolly presence of Santa throughout.

For eight days in December, the holiday spirit comes to life from 2 to 6 p.m. on Dec. 3-4, Dec. 9-11 and Dec. 16-18, when the decorated train will run continuously around sparkling Lake Gregory. Friday hours are 5 to 8 p.m. on Dec. 9 and 16.

NEW EVENT: Holiday Express Special Needs Night – Dec. 2 at Blackberry Farm

More than 60,000 Christmas lights (3½ miles worth) will illuminate the sparkling pioneer village, with shooting stars flashing above Blackberry Creek and holiday cartoon characters (Frosty, etc.) gracing the tour of Lake Gregory.

“Thousands and thousands of twinkling lights – from the ticket window to the train depot and all along the walkways – turn Blackberry Farm into a winter wonderland,” said facility supervisor Sandie Gilmer. “It’s a holiday spectacle to be experienced, and a truly memorable outing.”

Santa and his elves will be at Blackberry Farm each weekend, collecting children’s wish lists at the Early Streets Museum. There’s a sleigh full of other activities, including:

- Huntoon House: See what a Victorian Christmas looks like – from décor to small antique toy displays
- Reindeer Food Bar: Mix up a snack bag and take it home to treat Santa’s reindeer on Christmas Eve
- North Pole Oasis (Carriage Museum): Enjoy crafts, music and a full menu of concessions available for purchase
- Candy Cane Village (Adventure Playground): Festively decorated and lit; the kids will love it!
- Little Elf Hobby Shoppe (Weaver’s Cabin): Create a commemorative bird feeder to help your feathered friends celebrate the holidays
- Sugar Plum Play Land: Enjoy winter-themed sensory tables and dive into the corn crib
- Santa’s Workshop: Observe the blacksmith creating Victorian-era toys and tools
- Gingerbread School House: Classic holiday stories read alongside the warmth of a wood-burning stove
- North Pole Barn: Visit Olivia, the friendly Potbelly Pig, as she helps Santa’s reindeer get in shape for Christmas
- Reindeer Training Facility (Pony Ring): See the ponies demonstrate what it takes to become a sled-pulling reindeer

The Adventure Playground will be decorated and ready for action. Visitors can also enjoy hay wagon rides while being entertained by carolers and storytellers. Also, volunteer carolers (individual and group) are welcome; call 630-897-1550 to schedule.

As a new convenience, advance tickets can be purchased online for all Holiday Express dates.

All-access admission to Holiday Express is just \$5 per person (children under 2 free). Blackberry Farm is located at 100 S. Barnes Road in Aurora, just south of Galena Boulevard about one half mile west of Orchard Road. For more information, call 630-892-1550.

