



For Immediate Release
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**EXPLORE CHARLESTON AND CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF THE LOWCOUNTRY
WELCOME THE CHARLESTON SANTA'S RETURN**

Second Annual Santa Experience and Toy Drive to Spread Holiday Cheer

CHARLESTON, SC – The Charleston area must have been good this year because Santa is returning to town! In a delightful partnership that combines the magic of the holiday season with a dedication to the community, Explore Charleston and the Children's Museum of the Lowcountry invite families to visit The Charleston Santa.

Beginning Friday, November 29, The Best Friend Train Museum, conveniently situated between the downtown visitor center and the Children's Museum, will host The Charleston Santa. Each weekend between Thanksgiving and Christmas, children are invited to visit with the jolly old elf himself. Families will receive a free photo to commemorate the occasion.

There is no charge for the event, though reservations are required since space is limited.

The Charleston Santa not only welcomes families seeking a magical Santa experience, but it also creates an educational opportunity for visitors to learn more about the Best Friend of Charleston train and aims to make a meaningful impact by supporting Toys for Tots. In its Inaugural year, over 700 toys were donated. Explore Charleston and the Children's Museum have set a goal to "fill the train" with 1,000 new, unwrapped toys this holiday season.

"We are thrilled to partner with the Children's Museum of the Lowcountry for the second time on The Charleston Santa, a one-of-a-kind experience that adds to the magic of the Charleston area during the holidays. The first year exceeded our expectations, attracting many residents and visitors who learned about the history of the Best Friend of Charleston, America's first passenger steam locomotive. The Charleston Santa will welcome even more families this year and continue its journey to become a hallmark of the holidays in the Lowcountry," said Helen Hill, President and CEO of Explore Charleston.

Karen Coltrane, President and CEO of the Children's Museum of the Lowcountry, highlighted the family-centered experience created by the partnership:

“With the museum’s renovations complete, families can now enjoy an exciting new experience at the Children’s Museum, meet Santa next door at the Best Friend Train Museum, and embrace the spirit of giving by bringing or purchasing a toy to donate. Parents often seek ways to inspire generosity in their children, and this offers a perfect, tangible opportunity—children can give back while visiting Santa. Purchasing a toy from the museum’s Pop-Up Store, located right beside Santa, not only supports the holiday spirit but also directly benefits local families in need.”

The Children’s Museum will feature a holiday pop-up toy store at The Best Friend Train Museum, with proceeds supporting the Museums for All program for local families facing financial challenges. Additionally, the museum will host the **Elf Emporium** inside the children’s museum’s new lobby, a special shop where children ages 8 and under can select pre-wrapped gifts for family members and pets—making the holiday experience even more magical for young visitors.

The Charleston Santa welcomes families Nov. 29 (10:00am-6:00pm); Nov. 30-Dec. 1 (10:00-4:00), Dec. 7 - 8, Dec. 14 - 15, Dec. 21 - 22 (10:00am-4:00pm).

For more details and to make reservations, visit thecharlestonsanta.com. For hi-resolution images visit the [link here](#).

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About Explore Charleston:

As the region’s destination marketing and management organization, Explore Charleston represents ten municipalities across three counties. It seeks to unify and lead the local travel industry in marketing the Charleston area, create overnight visitation, and support responsible development through travel and tourism strategies.

About Children's Museum of the Lowcountry:

At the heart of Charleston, the non-profit Children's Museum of the Lowcountry provides its 150,000 annual visitors with innovative learning experiences that equip and inspire children to become creative problem solvers.