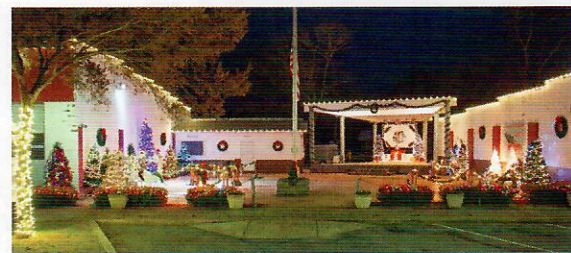
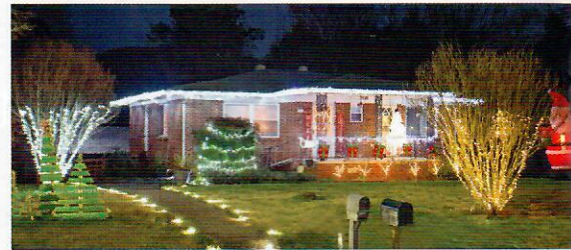
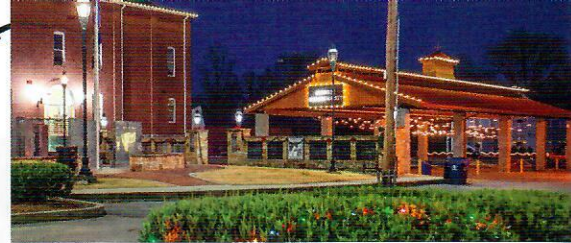




Buildings throughout downtown will twinkle this season during Light Up Pikeville.



Photography by John Hargis Photography

# Light Up Pikeville

Story by LISA SAVAGE

Lola Sells has always loved Christmas and watching Hallmark movies during the holiday season.

It was her dream to add lights to Pikeville to resemble one of the festive movie sets.

Last Christmas, that dream became reality with Light Up Pikeville. “We have the perfect town for it,” she says. “We have the courthouse, the farmers market and the downtown area, and it already looks like a scene out of a movie.”

Now that the event is in its second year, Lola hopes to add more lights and attract more participants. In the initial planning stage, she soon discovered that others share her dream of a picture-perfect Christmas. Before she knew it, homes and businesses were adding lights and decorations throughout downtown.

She received a \$10,000 donation from the city and other contributions to help pay for professionals to place lights on rooftops of downtown buildings. On Main Street, more than a quarter-mile of decorated businesses and storefronts displayed brightly colored Christmas lights. “The focus this year will be on Main Street,

from bypass to bypass, but everyone is invited to join in,” Lola says.

Lola loves the nostalgia and atmosphere the lights help create. And as a business owner herself — she runs It’s Lola’s, an antique store on Main Street — she knows attracting visitors to Pikeville can provide a boost to the local economy.

## COMMUNITY EFFORT

Planning starts in the summer, and lights start going up in October. “We start telling people in July to start getting ready,” Lola says. She plans to include more lights, events and decorations this year. “We’d like to add more Christmas trees and more wreaths.”

Light Up Pikeville officially starts on Nov. 12 with the annual cruise-in, which includes antique and unique cars decorated for Christmas.

Lola hopes to increase activities around events like the tree-lighting ceremony on the Bledsoe County Courthouse lawn.

There will be special music every weekend, along with the Christmas parade on Nov. 26, when Santa will make an appearance. She hopes more food vendors

## Downtown looks like a Hallmark movie

set up at the area farmers market during special events and that it becomes a place for holiday craft vendors. “We’d love for people to have an atmosphere like that to shop,” she says.

Lola would also like to expand to the area near the fairgrounds, with hopes that the farming community will be involved, too.

## TRANSFORMATION

Lola’s dream was to light up the town, and it wasn’t hard to imagine Pikeville’s transformation looking similar to a Hallmark movie scene. Many volunteers are on board to assist, and city and community leaders stepped up to help, too. “It’s been more than I could ever have imagined,” she says. “It wouldn’t have been possible without the cooperation of everybody working together to make this dream come true.”

**DUNLAP CHRISTMAS PARADE**  
Dec. 10

**FOR MORE DETAILS** about events, follow Light Up Pikeville on Facebook.