



Winter solstice greeted with lights, bonfires in Glencoe



The bonfires on a 28-degree evening warm the performers of the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance at the ninth annual Winter Solstice Trail of Lights event and parade, which took place on Dec. 20, 2024 in Glencoe at Shelton Park. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)

The light snow on the ground provided ambiance for the ninth annual Winter Solstice Trail of Lights event and parade on Dec. 20 in Glencoe at Shelton Park.

The celebration, held on a day when sunset occurred at 4:22 p.m., recognized the longest period of darkness during the year and the anticipation of more sunlight.

The winter solstice for 2024 was actually on Saturday, Dec. 21, the first day of winter.

The event was sponsored by the Friends of the Green Bay Trail (FGBT) with support from the Glencoe Park District. The district's participation included festive, uplighting in different colors placed along bases of heritage trees, as well as two full, vibrant staff-monitored bonfires.

“We love it, it’s refreshing and it’s fun to have a winter festival for this organization,” said Lynn Donaldson of Evanston, formerly of Glencoe for about 25 years, and an LGBT board member.



The warmth of the bonfires attracts people and a pup within a safe distance on a 28-degree evening at the ninth annual Winter Solstice Trail of Lights event and parade on Dec. 20, 2024 in Glencoe at Shelton Park. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)

People decorated strollers or wagons with lights and bright accessories. Many wore festive holiday light bulb battery-powered necklaces for the occasion and some people wore lights on their hats, brightening smiling faces.

“There’s so much to still see in the wintertime,” said Meridith Clement of Glencoe, LGBT trustee.

“It’s a great way to kind of say, ‘The year is starting again.’”

“We invite everyone to understand that the trail is always here and there’s always something to observe,” Clement said.

“Right now, the wildlife is very evident.”



Ava Scovil, 2, of Winnetka looks at the fire at the ninth annual Winter Solstice Trail of Lights event and parade on Dec. 20, 2024 in Glencoe at Shelton Park. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)

There was warm conversation by the bonfires. Seemingly enchanted by the fires was Ava Scovil, 2, of Winnetka, who was in a stroller with sibling Charlie Scovil, 1. Their mother Mariah Cunnick of Winnetka made sure to have the stroller decorated with holiday lights.

“This is the second year we’ve done this. It’s wonderful to be able to get outside this time of year even when it’s chilly, and we love to get lights on the stroller and be able to welcome the light,” Mariah Cunnick said.

Pets were included in the festivity and part of the parade around the park. There were refreshments like a s’mores kit.

The program began with welcoming remarks and the traditional dance performance with recorded music. The Abbots Bromley Horn Dance is an ancient procession and dance performed in the village of Abbots in Bromley in England.



Mariah Cunnick of Winnetka and daughter Ava Scovil, 2, are on a path and waiting for the parade to begin at the ninth annual Winter Solstice Trail of Lights event and parade on Dec. 20, 2024 in Glencoe at Shelton Park. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)



Left, Meridith Clement of Glencoe, FGBT trustee, addresses the audience. In the foreground is an illuminated stroller with parent Mariah Cunnick of Winnetka and children Ava Scovil, 2, and sibling Charlie Scovil, 1, at the ninth annual Winter Solstice Trail of Lights event and parade on Dec. 20, 2024 in Glencoe at Shelton Park. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)



Center, smiling, Jordan Wood of Highland Park prepares with other performers for the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance at the ninth annual Winter Solstice Trail of Lights event and parade on Dec. 20, 2024 in Glencoe at Shelton Park. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)

Jordan Wood of Highland Park participated in the horn dance. Wood attended the event with spouse Colby Wood and their son Temple, 2.

Jordan Wood started volunteering with the FGBT this year and is, "just trying to get more involved."

"This is another of one of their great activities, just to get out."

The Wood family celebrates Christmas and agreed the solstice event was festive to start their holidays and launch 2025.

"Just trying to find things to do outside," Colby Wood said.

One more photo below....



Right, Melissa Maganuco of Orlando, Florida, and of the New Trier Township High School Class of 1999, takes part in the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance at the ninth annual Winter Solstice Trail of Lights event and parade on Dec. 20, 2024 in Glencoe at Shelton Park. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)