

Christmas Magic delights crowds for the holidays

By LAURA BURKEY
For the Daily Record/Sunday News

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Michael Torpey of Mickelton, N.J., holds up his daughter Lydia, 16 months, as his wife Suzanne watches as the family completed its walk through the Christmas Magic lights display on Saturday, Nov. 26, 2011, at Rocky Ridge County Park. (DAILY RECORD / SUNDAY NEWS -- CHRIS DUNN)

York, PA - The record-setting October snow toppled trees and broke limbs all over York County. And Rocky Ridge County Park wasn't spared.

Organizers of Christmas Magic-A Festival of Lights feared that the damage would alter this year's event.

"We had to clean up from the storm damage, but the displays didn't really change," said Jeri Jones, program coordinator for York County Department of Parks and Recreation. "It might have set us back about three days, but we were ahead of schedule at that point anyhow."

The exposed branches weren't obvious to most visitors after the attraction opened recently, since they were hidden by the darkness. The colored lights, displays and music stole the limelight.

It

was the Whitesell family's eighth or ninth visit to Rocky Ridge's holiday display, located in the Springettsbury Township park. Mom Jeanne Whitesell said she enjoyed the family of four's time together, and they look forward to it every year.

This year, Christmas Magic boasts a larger Light-o-Rama section -- about 500 feet -- with lights synchronized to different holiday tunes. That was 8-year-old Trista Glace's favorite part. She enjoyed the sights before performing in the Shrewsbury Assembly of God's youth hand bell choir.

Bob and Maryann Brenneman of North Codorus Township remembered bringing their kids to see the display when they sold tickets through the 4-H club. This year, they came with their daughter, Barb, 40, and her son, Joshua.

"I like Thomas the Train," the excited 4-year-old explained, alluding to the Susquehanna Valley Garden Railroad Society's train garden in one of the pavilions. "He goes 'round the track."

Parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles shepherded their little ones from one display to another. One grandparent seized the opportunity to practice colors, pointing to different light bulbs as the toddler quietly whispered, "red," "green," "orange."

Santa Claus, aka Mike Ulrich, 48, of York, even stopped by. It was this Santa's first time there.

Amid the ooohs and ahhs at the light displays, Ulrich said he did have one special, serious request

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from a little girl.

"She asked me to bring all of the troops home," Ulrich said.

If you go

What: Christmas Magic

When: 6 to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, 5 to 9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday through Dec. 31. Closed Dec. 24-25.

Where: Rocky Ridge County Park, 3699 Deininger Road in Springettsbury Township

Cost: \$8 for adults; \$6 for children ages 4 to 12; children younger than 4 admitted free

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