

S. Shore festival is more than extravagantly decorated trees

Barton Foundation's third annual Festival of Trees and Lights (Dec. 2-4) will bring in the holiday season with trees and lights, all while benefiting the community by raising funds for the Barton Community Clinic.

More than 2,800 attended the 2010 event at MontBleu in Stateline.

This year's event includes designer trees and decorations, family night, teddy bear breakfast, teddy bear hospital, Barton's annual gala, Mrs. Claus' Gift Shop and the Polar Express.



The Festival of Trees and Lights is Dec. 2-4 at MontBleu.

Photo/LTN file

With more than 2,500 lights, the themed trees include gift packages ranging from exotic trips to exquisite items that will be voted on throughout the event and auctioned off at the gala. At the gala, doctors Paul Rork, Greg Bergner, and Brooks Martin will be honored with the Spirit of Philanthropy Award.

Here is a rundown of the ticketed events:

* Teddy Bear Hospital provides an interactive way for kids to learn about their health and hospitals in a fun, safe, “no poke” environment from real doctors, nurses and caregivers. Every child 12 and under attending the festival during the public viewing and Family Night will receive a free teddy bear.

* Family Night, Dec. 2 from 5-9pm, offers a time for families to experience the festival together. The \$25 (up to 6 people) admission fee includes a Santa photo, holiday-inspired crafts and face painting. *Lake Tahoe News* is giving away tickets to this event.

* Teddy Bear Breakfast, Dec. 3 at 8:30am, bring your child’s favorite doll or stuffed animal to be adorned with holiday flair while you enjoy a kid-friendly buffet. They can enjoy a puppet show, costumed characters will roam the room and, of course, Santa will be there to hear your child’s wishes and create that keepsake holiday photo. Adults \$20; Children (8 and under) \$15.

* The Gala, Dec. 3 at 5:30pm, is the Barton Foundation’s largest annual fundraiser. The black-tie optional event features a live auction, expanded silent auction, live entertainment and the winning cocktail from our Signature Cocktail Contest. This event is sold out.

* Polar Express, Dec. 5 at 4 and 6pm. Dress up in your best pajamas and grab a seat on one of the “trains.” Have your ticket punched by our conductors, sing carols as you make your way to the Red Hut for a cup of hot chocolate. From there the “trains” continue on to the MontBleu for refreshments, the reading of the “Polar Express”, and the songs of the Belles of Christmas choir. Space is limited to 300 people per departure. Tickets are \$15 per person.

Proceeds from the Festival of Trees and Lights will benefit

the expansion and renovation of the Barton Community Clinic to meet the needs of more the 1,600 uninsured and underinsured of patients each month. Last year, the foundation raised nearly \$45,000 for the Community Health Endowment which – created to ensure the future health of the Tahoe region. The clinic is expected to break ground in 2012.

To purchase tickets or for more information, go online or call (530) 543.5614.