

Harbors Will Light Up for the Holidays

Thursday, 12 December 2013

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Marina Cummisky/KMXT

As we get further into December, Christmas lights have been going up around Kodiak, lighting up buildings and houses in the darkening evenings. The festive cheer will soon be spreading to both the St. Herman and St. Paul harbors, as part of the Harbor Lights Festival.

Toby Sullivan is the executive director of the Maritime Museum, and helped organize the event.

“The Harbor Lights Festival is a celebration of the season, and what we’re doing is encouraging boat owners to decorate their boats with lights during the next few weeks here, through the end of the year.”

Sullivan said there used to be a boat parade in Kodiak, where boat owners would decorate their boats with Christmas lights, and drive them out to Spruce Cape and back for onlookers to enjoy. This parade has not happened for about ten years, mostly because of weather hazards.

“What happened was, a lot of times there was bad weather, because it is December in Kodiak, and the weather would be so bad that sometimes the boats would get out there, it was a little discouraging, especially for the littler boats.”

Sullivan said the Harbor Lights Festival won’t include a parade.

“We thought, well, what if we just had a Christmas boat parade without the parade part, and then people could walk down in the harbor and look at the boats, and the boat owners won’t have to get the boats out in the water, and maybe chance on having bad weather.”

Although boats will hopefully be lit up until the New Year, there will be a special event on the solstice. After walking around St. Herman and St. Paul harbors and enjoying the lights, people can go up to Fisherman’s Hall and have some hot chocolate or cider, and vote on their favorite decorations. The

three most popular boats will get a small prize. Overall, the idea of the festival is to celebrate the holiday season.

“We’re just hoping that the whole program is something to do in these dark December days, where people go down and look at the lights, get a little fresh air walking around, and look at the boats.”

Whether the Harbor Lights Festival becomes an annual event depends on this year’s turnout. The voting and treats will be on December 21 at Fisherman’s Hall, from 5 p.m. until 9 p.m.