

Buddy the Elf gives inside scoop on Friday's Christmas Tree Lighting and Christmas Market

By Brock Weir

Saturday's rainy weather might have kept Sugar Plum the Elf away home at the North Pole with the sniffles and away from Aurora's Santa Under the Stars Parade, but Buddy the Elf made the trip to take in the sites before he joined Mrs. Claus at Town Hall for Friday night's official Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Speaking to The Auroran before heading back up to the North Pole to help Mrs. Claus get ready for ceremony, over which she presides before regaling youngsters and their families with Twas the Night Before Christmas, Buddy shared his excitement ? especially over a play bearing his name set to be performed by Marquee Theatrical Productions.

The three-day Christmas extravaganza kicks off on Friday night with the Christmas Tree lighting itself in the forecourt of Town Hall. A Christmas Market will take place in front of the adjacent Aurora Seniors' Centre from 6 ? 9 p.m.

Inside, fun and games will be had before the Market returns on Saturday from 12 noon to 9 p.m. and again on Sunday from 12 noon to 6 p.m.

THE AURORAN: Thanks for taking the time to speak with us, Buddy. Now, why were you so keen to book the return trip to Aurora for Friday night?

BUDDY: The Christmas Tree Lighting has always been on Wednesday, so it is quite a change up to have it on a Friday this year. But I understand it is not just a two hour event this year, it is going to be all weekend. Friday night is the place to celebrate the lighting of the tree. I am quite excited to see if more kids come out because Friday night isn't a school night, knowing they don't have to rise and shine for it on Saturday morning!

TA: What makes the tree lighting so special?

B: It's the whole shiny spectrum of lights. Christmas trees are like snowflakes. No two are the same. They all have their individual personality, their individual decoration. There is so much uniqueness and individuality to a Christmas tree that it is a work of art. In Aurora, it's a once-in-year experience where you can also meet Mrs. Claus, see a fire juggling act, get up close to our reindeer and more!

TA: In understand that after the Saturday's parade, you took some time to visit some of the vendors that will be at the Christmas Market.

B: And I hopped from door to door to make sure other businesses in your downtown knew about it so they can mark November 29 ? December 1 on their calendar for next year and have a presence at the market.

TA: What are you doing to help Mrs. Claus get ready for Friday night?

B: Of course, as Santa's shoes get shined, we have to shine and polish Mrs. Claus' glasses. We need to make sure her attire is special. She is too busy fussing and caring about us and watching over Santa himself that we also need to make sure her clothes are in order. She doesn't get to leave the North Pole very often, so there's an added responsibility to make sure she has everything she needs for her vacation down south.

TA: We saw a lot of kids talking to Mrs. Claus at last year's Tree Lighting. Can you share with us some of the messages she brings home to Santa?

B: A lot of children have wishes for other children. It seems the children in Aurora's hearts are already filled so they spread their wishes to other children, which is what makes Aurora unique and very special and community-centric.

TA: In addition to Twas the Night Before Christmas, we heard that Marquee Theatrical Productions will be putting on a play with a pretty familiar name!

B: Yes! ?The Elf Named Buddy.? I've heard about it, so I have to go to see it on Friday night! I'm assuming if it is Buddy, it has to be me because there is no better Buddy than me!

TA: What are you most looking forward to exploring and seeing at the new Christmas Market?

B: I've heard there are going to be things called European Christmas Huts that the Town has made and each one will have a vendor inside! Now, we have real ice and snow igloos up north, so I have to see what they claim is an igloo up here! Of course, Mrs. Claus will be inside the Seniors' Centre, so it will be nice to see her do what she does best. I also hope to be able to take in the bands, and make crafts down here with some of the pieces we made up north.

TA: Are you a crafty elf?

B: I have to take crafts back with me to show the other elves that I successfully got down here! It's all about the games I get to play once I get back home. It's all about the bragging rights!

For more on Friday's Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony and the weekend's Christmas Market, visit www.aurora.ca