

# KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN'S

# Holiday EXPRESS ..... 2017 .....



130<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



The KCS Holiday Express has released its schedule and will be stopping in Oak Grove during the 2017 holiday season! The train will stop in 22 communities in six states on 26 dates. At each stop, visitors can board the train, visit with Santa and his elves and tour the inside of three cars of the festive six-car train. This is a free event and KCS Holiday Express will stop in downtown Oak Grove at the Broadway Crossing on Thursday, December 14. The train will be in town at 4:00pm until the last child boards the train and gets to visit with Santa!

**KCS Holiday Express**, Kansas City Southern's six-car Christmas train is pulled by the beautifully restored Southern Belle passenger train. 2017 marks the 17th year the Holiday Express has crossed the country and **FIRST visit to Oak Grove**. Visitors can board the train, visit with Santa and his elves and tour the inside of three cars. The KCS Holiday Express includes a smiling tank car named Rudy; a flatcar carrying Santa's sleigh, reindeer and a miniature village; a gingerbread boxcar; an elves' workshop; the reindeer stable; and a little red caboose. Each car is sparkling with lights. The Southern Belle passenger train provided luxury service between Kansas City and the Gulf Coast region from 1940 to 1969. It was restored in 1995 and provides a peek into the past as well as powering the KCS Holiday Express into town.

In addition to bringing smiles to kids' faces, the KCS Holiday Express has a charitable component. Over the past 16 years it's been part of the season, the train has raised over \$1 million to purchase gift cards, which are donated to The Salvation Army at each scheduled stop. These gift cards are used to purchase warm clothing and other necessities for children in the local community. This year's Oak Grove donation will go to the Oak Grove Community Service League.

In 2017, KCS will work with Salvation Army to target communities along the route most impacted by Hurricane Harvey for additional support, including Victoria, El Campo, Kendleton and Beaumont, Texas. For these communities, The KCS Charitable Fund will make a supplemental donation to provide additional support as they recover from the hurricane. KCS and its employees have previously given over \$100,00 to the American Red Cross for Hurricane Harvey relief.

The **KCS Holiday Express** began as the "Santa Train" in 2001 after volunteers dedicated over 8,000 hours to the transformation of retired rail cars. The Santa Train ran on a segment of the network bought by KCS in 1997. In 2000, some warm-hearted KCS employees noticed that the Santa Train was the only Christmas some kids had and that they lacked essential items like coats, hats and gloves. They decided to elevate the project and, in 2001, volunteers transformed a retired freight train into the festive holiday train communities know today. So, we are looking forward to a great community event and invite you to come and share in the holiday spirit!



CITY OF  
**Oak Grove**