



UCNSB News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Ellen Fisher, 386-424-3003
November 23, 2011

The U.C.'s new LED Christmas star to shine for the first time! Come be part of the festivities, this Friday, November 25, at 6 p.m.

(New Smyrna Beach, Fla.) – The Utilities Commission's new LED Christmas star will shine for the first time this Friday, Nov. 25 at 6 p.m. as part of the Christmas on Canal Street festivities in New Smyrna Beach.

The star will be officially lit by Stuart Hughes from the U.C.'s Electric Department, who is the person who engineered and, with help from the U.C.'s Fleet Maintenance crew, created the new star and the rotating mechanism for it. Stuart's dad actually proposed to his mom under the Christmas lights of the Old Fort Park water tower on Christmas Eve in 1955, just prior to the star's birth.

Utilities Commission Chairman and retired System Operations Director Walter Allen will lead the star lighting portion of the Christmas on Canal Street ceremony.

Long-time employees, residents and visitors are likely to remember the Old Fort Park water tower strung with Christmas lights and topped with the brightly lit star, a community tradition that began with a few light strands in the early 1950s. The tradition grew as did the lights, until as many as 18 streamers of 1,165 incandescent bulbs of red, amber, flame and orange lights cascaded down from the top of the 168-foot water tower. One-hundred forty-four (144) white bulbs lit the 10-foot high, 10-foot wide, 150-lb star that graced the very top for 36 years until the tower was dismantled in 1993. The old star then made a brief appearance on top of the main office building at 200 Canal Street for a couple of years.

The new star is a lighter, more energy-efficient version and will shine from the top of the U.C.'s downtown office building. The original star was replaced with a slightly larger (14 feet in diameter) aluminum, rotating version, and the 267 lights adorning it are now LED, which use 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs. In fact, the new star will cost only \$11.07 in energy to run between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, as opposed to \$68.43 that it would cost to run the 144 incandescent bulbs on the old star.

Stuart will be at the U.C. on Friday night, November 25, at 6 pm, to light the star on cue with the lighting of the Canal Street Christmas lights, and the Christmas tree in Christmas Park, just next to the U.C.'s main office building. You can also listen to Stuart on the radio at 8:20 a.m. this Friday morning, in an interview with WSBB, AM 1230, to talk about the history of the star and about the new tradition he helped start for us. The star will be lit through New Year's Day. The effort is in conjunction with the Christmas on Canal Street festivities sponsored by area merchants. For more information, you can check out www.christmasoncanalstreet.com.

About UCNSB: The Utilities Commission, City of New Smyrna Beach, Florida, is one of Florida's 34 municipal electric utilities. The Utility also provides water, wastewater, reuse and internet service to approximately 25,000 customers in the greater New Smyrna Beach area. The Utilities Commission is a non-taxing, political subdivision of the State of Florida and is funded solely through utility revenues.