

## CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE IN TOWN

Welcome the New Year with live music, balloon drops and champagne in Crystal Lake.

By Claudia Lenart | December 29, 2010

There's no need to travel far to have a memorable New Year's Eve. Crystal Lake venues offer a variety of opportunities to ring in the New Year with food, dance and music.

The Raue Center for the Arts is hosting a New Year's Eve Party featuring The Neverly Brothers, who perform a set that records the evolution of rock and roll. The event was a sell-out in 2009, and only 120 tickets are available.

"It's a more intimate event with all the tables on the stage with the band," said Jackie Ruiz, administrative assistant for the Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is selling 60 tickets for the event and the proceeds will benefit the Crystal Lake Chamber Foundation, which originally formed to fund an addition to the Chamber building. Ruiz said the Foundation will also give scholarship funds.

The Raue Center party will begin at 9 p.m. and includes hors d'oeuvres and a champagne toast at midnight. Tickets are \$105.

The Crystal Lake Holiday Inn has a full evening planned for New Years Eve and a variety of packages. The Star 105.5 radio station will host the event which includes Bad Medicine, a Bon Jovi tribute band. Attendees can also win a vacation for two to Las Vegas to see the real Bon Jovi or a vacation to Atlanta to see John Mellencamp.

The full package costs \$330 per couple and includes preferred seating, deluxe overnight accommodations, a dinner buffet, champagne toast at midnight, four hours open bar, as well as hats and noisemakers. For those who don't want to spend the night at the hotel, a package is available for \$199 per couple. There is also limited general admission available after 9:30 p.m., which includes a three-hour open bar for \$49 per person.

Don Bernhardt, food and beverage manager for the Holiday Inn, said they expect about 250 people to attend their New Year's Eve party.

Dance the night away to disco, rock and pop hits with Libido Funk circus at the Fire Bar and Grill.

"They put on a really great show and they get the crowd up and moving. We're really looking forward to it," said Jessica Melinger, bartender at the Fire Bar.

A \$60 ticket includes a four-course buffet, open bar from 8 p.m. to midnight, a champagne toast, balloon drop and party favors. There is also shuttle service to the Holiday Inn Express in Algonquin and a 25 percent discount on room rates for party attendees.

"It is always a good time and I've been telling people to prepay because we can't guarantee we will have tickets at the door," Melinger said.

Duke's Alehouse will host a candlit diner with upscale cuisine paired with beers and wines, said Chef Zak Dolezal. There will be specials and jukebox entertainment, as well as a complementary champagne toast at midnight.

Finn McCools Irish Sports Pub is offering a \$35 package deal, from 8 p.m. to midnight. It includes appetizers, an open call bar, a disc jockey, multi-media countdown and balloon drop.

"Tickets are selling quickly. If you're coming on New Years Eve, call ahead and get tickets," said Lauren Macalupo, manager.