EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
BLUE CROSS RIVER RINK WINTERFEST 2015-2016

PHILADELPHIA, PA (November 4, 2015): The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) has teamed up with great Philadelphia partners: Independence Blue Cross, Garces Group, Franklin Fountain, and Groundswell Design Group to once again transform Penn’s Landing into a winter wonderland called Blue Cross River Rink Winterfest, open to the public from November 27, 2015 – February 28, 2016. This outdoor ice skating rink on the river is surrounded by a beautifully lit winter forest featuring a majestic holiday tree and a chalet-style Lodge with food and beverages from some of Philly’s finest establishments. A new feature this year is an entire part of the site dedicated to stylized winter warming cottages, Franklin Fountain’s Confectionery Cabin, and fire pits.
Blue Cross RiverRink, now in its third year as a seasonal winter park, and its 22nd year as an outdoor ice skating rink is the centerpiece of this magical winter landscape. The regulation-sized rink offers daily public skating sessions, season-long special events, parties, private functions, as well as skate rentals and sharpening. It is made possible by its founding and title sponsor Independence Blue Cross.

“Skating next to the Delaware River against the backdrop of the Ben Franklin Bridge has become a favorite winter tradition for thousands of area residents,” said Kathy Albanese, Independence Blue Cross Director of Corporate Relations Development. “We’re proud to continue supporting a Philadelphia institution that encourages everyone to enjoy fresh air and fun, and helps to make the region a healthier place to work, live, and play.”

Surrounding the rink is a winter garden and forest created by DRWC in conjunction with David Fierabend of Groundswell Design Group. The site has been designed in such a way that it can translate from a winter ice skating rink to a summer roller skating rink, and back again. This repurposing model is built upon the use of recycled shipping containers, hundreds of trees and shrubs, reuse of the elements from Spruce Street Harbor Park, and moveable lighting and furnishings.

In response to public demand, food and beverage options are now spread across the entire Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest site. **New this year is Franklin Fountain’s Confectionery Cabin, based off of the partnership formed this past summer with Eric and Ryan Berley of Franklin Fountain and Shane’s Confectionery.** This cabin, located next to the fire pits will serve ice cream waffle sandwiches, drinking chocolate, s’mores kits, and more (details below).
Notes Ryan Berley, co-owner of Franklin Fountain, “After our first summer on the River at Spruce Street Harbor Park with the S.S. Franklin Fountain, our staff was looking to again set sail for another successful season. While the winter is typically slow in the ice cream business, we do have an extensive menu of hot soda drinks and delicious warm baked goods to attract the weather weary. As we dreamed up a Confectionery Cabin - think Gingerbread Haus meets Maple Sugar Shack - our plans solidified and we decided to turn up the heat and keep that copper kettle cooking at Winterfest!”

The Lodge Restaurant and Bar houses comfy couches, indoor fireplaces, rustic decorations, arcade games, and a wraparound porch complete with rockers and heat lamps. The clear-sided chalet allows visitors to watch the ice skaters and the beautiful views of the river from the comfort of a heated space.

Garces Group will return, carrying over favorites from the summer including the Village Burger, short rib fries, Frohman’s sausages and pretzels, and the Distrito Taco Stand. Bars will also be located within the Lodge, featuring local craft beers and hot specialty cocktails perfect for a winter day or night. Notes Aaron Kleinle Vice President, Operations at Garces Group, “Garces is thrilled to be involved for the second year in a row at Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest. DRWC has done an exceptional job of making this a destination for not only Philadelphians, but for visitors from all over the country. Our desire to bring approachable, casual food to such a great location with an amazing partner is quite frankly, a no brainer.”

The winter wonderland experience would not be complete without a full calendar of events. This year’s event schedule includes a Holiday Tree Lighting Presented by PECO, Skates with Santa, New Year’s Eve Parties on Ice, Winterfest Brewfest, and more. A complete events calendar will be available online at www.riverrink.com. With numerous entertainment options, making a trip down to the Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest becomes an affordable and fun family outing.

With all of these elements, DRWC continues to build innovative programming and design along the waterfront that provides new, authentically-Philadelphia seasonal traditions that activate the waterfront and set the stage for the redevelopment of the entire Penn’s Landing site.

SPECIAL EVENTS

BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK WINTERFEST PREVIEW PARTY

November 24: Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest Preview Party, 8-11PM
Be the first to celebrate all things magical about winter on the Waterfront – ice skating, fire pits, holiday lights, enchanted forests, winter Lodges, cozy blankets and specialty seasonal cocktails. Tickets are only $10, and include ice skating and your first beverage. Be sure to get your ticket early because they were completely sold out last year.
Tickets: https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/997313

BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK WINTERFEST OPENING WEEKEND
Friday-Sunday, November 27-29
Shopping on Black Friday is overrated, which is why we’re encouraging everyone to come out to Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest to work off their Thanksgiving feasts and celebrate with their families. Enjoy three days of fun and entertainment at Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest, with a Star Wars themed Opening Day. Full schedule of events to be announced next week. Tickets for the season: http://riverrink.ticketfly.com/

BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK TREE LIGHTING PRESENTED BY PECO

Friday, December 4, Time TBA
Need a whole lot of holiday spirit? For FREE? Join Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest, and an entire cast of performers, singers, dancers, and ice skaters to celebrate First Friday in December and to usher in the holiday season. Be dazzled as the rink lights up one of the city’s largest holiday trees with 40,000+ lights thanks to PECO’s sponsorship (they’re LEDs). Full program for the night to be announced next week.

DJ NIGHTS

Friday Nights and Saturday Nights all season
This year, Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest is looking to shake things up and shine a spotlight on local talent from the Philadelphia region. The rink is currently looking for DJs who can get skaters to move and dance on the ice throughout the entire season because there’s nothing like spending a chilly winter evening ice skating with friends while listening to some great music. Applications: http://www.delawareriverwaterfront.com/contact/entertainment
SKATE WITH SANTA

Saturdays and Sundays in December until the 20\textsuperscript{th}, 12PM – 4PM
Getting your picture taken with Santa at the mall is old news. **Lace up those skates and get that family portrait on ice with Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest’s skating Santa.** If that’s not good enough, climb up onto the giant #visitphilly chair, now painted red, for a photo op that can feature the entire family.

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS MOVIE NIGHTS

December 14 – December 25, **Movies start at 6PM and continue until the rink closes for the night**
Bring the family out to Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest for movie nights for the 12 days of Christmas. Enjoy holiday favorites such as Elf, Miracle on 34\textsuperscript{th} Street, The Holiday, It’s a Wonderful Life, Charlie Brown Christmas, and more. All movies will be shown in the Lodge, with plenty of comfy seating and great food and drinks for the whole family.

EXTENDED HOLIDAY HOURS

**December 19 – January 3, 11AM – 1AM EVERY DAY**
Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest is open seven days a week, even holidays, which are some of the best times to visit. With extended hours for ice skating and concessions, every day is the perfect day to bring friends and family to the rink to skate, enjoy FREE activities and entertainment, cozy up by the fire pits and fireplaces, grab a rocking chair on the wraparound porch, and eat seasonal food served up by Garces Group and Franklin Fountain.
**HOLIDAY FLEA**

*December 19 – December 20*

After a super successful partnership with R5 Productions this summer at Spruce Street Harbor Park Presented by Univest/Valley Green Bank, **select holiday vendors from the Punk Rock Flea Market will return to Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest for a weekend full of holiday shopping.** Coming a week after the Punk Rock Flea Market Holiday Edition, the Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest edition will feature curated vendors selling perfect gifts for friends, family, or for yourself.

**NEW YEAR’S EVE PARTIES ON ICE**

*Thursday, December 31, 2 Parties for the 6PM and Midnight fireworks*

**Secure your spot for the best view of the SugarHouse New Year’s Eve Fireworks on the Waterfront.** Each party features food, drinks, music, entertainment, ice skating (of course), and a show-stopping fireworks finale. More details TBA.

**SUGARHOUSE NEW YEAR’S EVE FIREWORKS ON THE WATERFRONT**

*Thursday, December 31*

Celebrate New Year’s Eve Philadelphia style, with fireworks! SugarHouse Casino is once again making the city’s NYE celebration possible by sponsoring the SugarHouse New Year’s Eve Fireworks on the Waterfront.
**WINTERFEST BREWFEST**

*Saturday and Sunday, January 23-24*

We tried this for the first time last year and had people lining up out of the door before the rink even opened. So, Winterfest Brewfest returns for the 2nd year, making it a new Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest tradition. **Sample fantastic regional beers in the Lodge, meet the brewers, win contests, and listen to great music.** All sampled beers will be for sale on-site, so grab a full pint, and head out to the fire pits for a perfect winter weekend (complete with s’mores).

**SWEETS-N-SKATES**

*Saturday, February 6*

Hot chocolate, cold chocolate, chocolate drinks, chocolate by the fire or while ice skating. **Come down to Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest for a full day of chocolate celebrations.** Tons more details to come including great partners, activities and chocolates specially crafted just for the rink.

**SWEETHEART SKATES**

*Sunday, February 14*

Romantic winter activities: cuddling by the fire, specialty hot cocktails while curled up on a comfy couch, holding hands while ice skating, sharing a milkshake, a kiss in an enchanted garden. Check, check and check. They’ll all be at Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest, and there’s no better time to bring that special person down to the rink than during Sweetheart Skates. **These special skate sessions feature romantic lighting, flowers, chocolates, ice skating, and a DJ playing requested love songs.** Want to surprise your sweetie with an engagement proposal? **Let us know!**
FOOTBALL SUNDAYS AND MONDAYS

This year, Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest will be projecting our beloved Philly sports teams onto the big screen. Multiple 14’x7’ screens have been set up throughout the Lodge so that you never have to miss a game even if you’re out ice skating with the family.

BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK WINTERFEST DETAILS

ICE SKATING

Overview: Blue Cross RiverRink returns for its 22nd year, and its third year as Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest, making it an established holiday tradition for Philadelphians and those around the region and a must-do during the winter season. Independence Blue Cross continues as the founding and title sponsor, making the rink possible each year. Blue Cross RiverRink is the only outdoor regulation-sized rink in Philadelphia. With the Delaware River to the east and the Ben Franklin Bridge to the north, it makes for a spectacular winter scene.
Hours: Blue Cross RiverRink is open seven days a week including all holidays from November 27, 2015 – February 28, 2016.

Opening Weekend Hours
    November 27: 11AM - 12:30AM
    November 28: 11AM - 12:30AM
    November 29: 11AM – 10:30PM

Regular Operating Hours
    Monday - Thursday: 1PM – 10:30PM
    Friday: 1PM – 12:30AM
    Saturday: 11AM – 12:30AM
    Sunday: 11AM – 10:30PM

Extended Hours, December 19 – January 3
    Monday - Sunday: 11AM-1AM

Special Hours

Pricing: General admission to Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest is FREE and open to the public. Skating Admission – $3 (FREE skating admission for all Independence Blue Cross cardholders and employees) Skate Rental – $10
Sizes available – Kids 8 – Adult 15. Double blades available for the youngsters. Skate sharpening is also offered on-site for those bringing their own ice skates.

PARK AMENITIES

Overview: Surrounding Blue Cross RiverRink is a winter garden and forest created using locally sourced recycled shipping containers, hundreds of holiday trees and shrubs, woodchips, rustic furniture, market lights, and fire pits. Thousands of lights illuminate the entire space from the moment visitors enter, and continue to delight with a beautifully lit holiday tree and color-washed rink.

New this year are the addition of five winter warming cottages – three-sided, furnished cabins that will be available for rent or on a first-come first-serve basis. Each cottage will have its own unique décor, complete with electric fireplaces, infrared heating, antler chandeliers, warm armchairs, and loveseats. A boardwalk in front will connect the fire pit area to the cottages and the Lodge.

Next to the fire pits will be the Franklin Fountain’s Confectionery Cabin. The repurposed shipping container will be used by Franklin Fountain to serve ice cream waffle sandwiches, drinking chocolate, s’mores kits, and more (details below). Its location next to the fire pits allows for prime s’mores making and consuming. The Confectionery Cabin is dual purposed; a stairwell brings visitors onto an observation deck with the perfect view of the entire site – fire pits, Lodge, holiday tree, and ice skating rink. Heaters and drink rails create another perfect moment to relax and enjoy the beauty of Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest.
The Lodge Restaurant and Bar recreates a winter ski-chalet atmosphere with a large white tented structure with completely clear sides to view the beautiful lights and watch the ice skaters. A wraparound porch built from the original boardwalk at Spruce Street Harbor Park is lined with rocking chairs, woolen blankets and heat lamps for the ultimate in Waterfront luxury on a cold winter night. Inside, The Lodge is furnished with comfortable couches, tons of gathering tables, bistro seating, mantles, and decorative touches that transform what was once a parking lot into a warm and inviting space.
A smaller Kids Lodge is located directly next to The Lodge, built with the littler ones in mind. The flooring is made of rubber mats, allowing kids to walk directly from the rink to the play area without having to take off their skates. The Kids Lodge is playfully decorated, and features games of all shapes and sizes, including small rides, pinball, Skee-Ball, a photo booth, air hockey and more. It’s the perfect place to host a birthday party!

Fun facts:
- Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest will be lit by 100,000+ lights including over 40,000 lights on the holiday tree alone.
- The unique lighting design, created by DRWC’s in-house team, will use supernova lights to create a dazzling tree and entrance ways, a market light canopy over the firepits, and programmed lights that will wash the rink surface in ever-changing colors.
- The holiday tree will once again be one of the largest live trees in the city. Topping out at 45 feet, this beautiful Douglas fir is being brought to the rink via flatbed trailer from a farm in West Chester and craned into place.
- A 4-zoned sound system in the fire pit area, skate rental, ice skating rink, and the Lodge is specially created for special live music and DJ nights, rentals, announcements, and mood setting atmospheric music. It’s also perfect for all of the wedding proposals that happen throughout the season!
- Inside the Lodge, electric fireplaces have been placed inside mantles salvaged from the Divine Lorraine Hotel – a nod to Philadelphia’s regal architectural history. Digital picture frames on the mantels will feature rotating photos from visitors who tag their photos on social media with #riverrink.
- In response to customer surveys last year, more seating will be added to The Lodge and the space will be reconfigured to accommodate both small and large groups.
• 5 new winter warming cottages individually styled to create little moments for groups of friends or small parties. Each cottage will feature an electric fireplace, chandeliers, rustic furnishings, and heaters.
• The huge #visitphilly rocking chair, one of two that have become iconic to these waterfront parks will have a new coating of paint. The red rocking chair will be the perfect spot for photo ops.
• The kids lodge will feature games like: Ice Balls (a Skee-Ball-like game), Pirates of the Caribbean, Simpsons, Shrek, and Fish Tales pinball machines, Guitar Hero, Ms. Pacman, H2Overdrive, Jurassic Park, Nicktoons Nitro driving game, air hockey, and plenty of small kiddie rides.

RENTALS

Overview: Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest can be rented for birthday parties, private events, and group outings. Visitors can reserve the winter warming cottages, kids lodge, special areas within the Lodge, the party space or the entire facility. Garces Group catering is the site’s exclusive caterer. More information about rentals can be found on the Blue Cross RiverRink Website.

FOOD AND DRINKS

This year Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest will feature food by Garces Group and Franklin Fountain, creating a complete winter menu for full meals, snacks, desserts, hot and cool treats, food for meat-lovers and vegetarians, and gluten-free and nut-free menu items.

Garces Group

Garces Group is returning to Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest, carrying over favorites from Spruce Street Harbor Park, and The Lodge. Last year’s favorite item, the Village Burger, will be back at The Lodge, with rotating burger specials alongside a house-made veggie burger, and short rib and queso fresco topped fries. Garces Group will also offer grilled sausages and dogs from Frohman’s including a Chicago-style hot dog, Bavarian salt pretzels with lager mustard, and a potato-bun grilled cheese sandwich with roasted tomato soup. On weekends, the Distrito Taco Stand in the Lodge will be serving traditional Mexican street tacos. Gluten-free items and buns will be available at all locations.

For more information about Garces Group, check out their Website, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter

Franklin Fountain

Chase away the chill this winter at the Franklin Fountain’s Confectionery Cabin at Winterfest. The brand new menu includes ice cream waffle sandwiches from the Franklin Fountain featuring traditional Belgian waffles, chocolate waffles, and gingerbread spiced waffles; drinking chocolate from Shane Confectionery’s Chocolate Cafe; and s'mores kits featuring graham crackers, chocolate, and marshmallows all made on-site at the Franklin Fountain and Shane Confectionery. And, of course, all the usual treats one would expect on a blustery day, with
warm drinks like hot apple cider, coffee, and glogg and seasonal ice cream flavors like peppermint stick (also available dairy free), cinnamon, eggnog, hot chocolate, vanilla, and chocolate. Don't miss out on this delicious winter wonderland.

For more information about Franklin Fountain, check out their Website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

---

Bar Service

Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest will feature three different bar locations throughout the Lodge at peak times. The craft beer program will highlight local and regional beers, with some limited editions to be announced. Hot cocktails will feature Pinnacle Whipped and Vanilla Vodkas to mix with hot chocolate, Jim Beam Maple and Jim Beam Apple Bourbons for spiked apple cider, and specialty drinks made with 2 Gingers Irish Whisky and Saint Brendan’s Irish Cream.

Hours of food and beverage operations:
- The Lodge Bar and Restaurant will be open seven days a week
- Distrito Taco Stand open Friday – Sunday
- Franklin Fountain’s Confectionery Cabin open Thursday – Sunday

Times are subject to change. Please check the website for more information.

MORE BLUE CROSS RIVERRINK WINTERFEST DETAILS

Contact information
Phone: 215-925-RINK
Email: riverrink@drwc.org  
Website: www.riverrink.com  
Social Media:  
- Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)  
- Penn’s Landing (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)  

Address  
Columbus Boulevard at Market Street (101 S. Columbus Blvd)  

Transportation  
- Public Transportation:  
  - Bus Routes 25, 21, 42, 17, 33, 48 and 12 all stop within walking distance of Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest.  
  - SEPTA Market-Frankford Line stops at Second and Market, which is a five minute walk from Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest.  
- Bike parking on-site. Ride Indego stations located at Columbus Boulevard at Spruce Street and at 2nd Street at Market Street  
- Parking: Parking lots located at Market Street and Walnut Street at Columbus Blvd  

Season  
Friday, November 27, 2015 – Sunday, February 28, 2016  

Photos  
All photos can be found in our press room: http://www.delawareriverwaterfront.com/footer/hi-res-photos/2015/10/22/blue-cross-riverrink-winterfest-2014-2015 (password is aidemdrwc)  

Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest Sponsors  

About Independence Blue Cross  
Independence Blue Cross is the leading health insurance organization in southeastern Pennsylvania. With our affiliates, we serve nearly 10 million people in 24 states and the District of Columbia, including 2.5 million in the region. For nearly 80 years, we have been enhancing the health and wellness of the people and communities we serve by delivering innovative and competitively priced health care products and services; pioneering new ways to reward doctors, hospitals, and other health care professionals for coordinated, quality care; and supporting programs and events that promote wellness. To learn more, visit www.ibx.com. Connect with us on Facebook at ibx.com/facebook and on Twitter at @ibx. Independence Blue Cross is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.  

About the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation  
DRWC is a 501(c)(3) created in January 2009, exclusively for the benefit of the City of Philadelphia and its citizens. The fundamental purpose of DRWC is to design, develop, program and maintain public amenities such as permanent and seasonal parks, trails, and streetscape improvements to transform the waterfront into a vibrant destination for recreational, cultural,
and commercial activities for the residents and visitors of Philadelphia as is consistent with the goals of the Master Plan for the Central Delaware. Daily programming throughout the entire year is changing the way Philadelphians see and converse about the waterfront, and is helping to create spaces and communities that connect residents and visitors to the waterfront.

####