

# Ringling out the Centennial year



About 8,000 people danced and drank their way into 1983 on the Roanoke City Market Friday night at a New Year's Eve celebration that closed out the city's Centennial year. It was the second New Year's celebration held on the market, but this year's partygoers had better weather than those who came downtown to welcome in 1982. The weather was brisk with clear skies for Friday's bash — much nicer than the subfreezing temperatures and snow that marked the previous year's event. 'It was just great — the weather was perfect,' said Gail Sowers, coordinator of events for the Roanoke Area Market Association and Downtown Roanoke Inc., the co-sponsors of the party along with the city Parks and Recreation Department and radio station WROV. 'We had from the very young to senior citizens. It added a nice touch to the affair. . . . Everyone was in the spirit of having a good time.' The revelers consumed their share of champagne. Concessions selling the bubbly by the glass went through 720 bottles before running out. 'I think we could have easily handled another 10 cases,' Mrs. Sowers said. Police made a few arrests, but no major incidents were reported. Officials said they had expected about half the number of people who turned out. 'We didn't think it would be anywhere near this,' said Matt Eakle, a WROV announcer serving as one of the masters of ceremonies. 'We thought everyone would have plans for New Year's Eve.' The radio station broadcast the four-hour event live.

Staff photos by WAYNE SCARBERRY

WROV's Bruce Jacobsen encourages the crowd as midnight approaches