

DREAM | HOMES

Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific's eighth annual Home & Chef Tour shows off unique views of the old and new all while helping out Clatsop County kids

■ Story by **MARILYN GILBAUGH**

Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific presents its eighth annual Home & Chef Tour this weekend, featuring country homes in the Lewis and Clark area south of Astoria. Grab a camera and a buddy or two — or three or more. Carpooling is encouraged, and a car is a must. From 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10, it's a rare opportunity to explore Clatsop County's beautiful Lewis and Clark countryside, both inside and out.

The Cascade Range and its towering forests sit as a backdrop to the region's lowlands, meandering waterways, pastures and farmlands (animals included). This area is a gem in Clatsop County's awesome and expansive beauty, a beauty that is often usurped by the better-known Columbia River and Pacific Ocean beaches.

Five private homes (each housing a local chef inside), plus one well-known garden center cordially open their doors to greet, meet and offer signature taste treats to all comers. Assistance League's Home & Chef Tour is a chance to get an up-close-and-personal look inside five private residences and a fitting sixth bonus stop.

Brim's Farm and Garden Center has agreed to be part of this year's tour. Owner and master gardener Linda Brim will be brimming with gardening ideas, answers for spring and fall landscaping questions, and demonstrations too. Brim's will host a chef from Astoria's Blue Scorchers Bakery.

When securing homes for the 2015 Home & Chef Tour, Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific's Mary Davies didn't find the task to be too much of a challenge. "I just ask very nicely and explain what Assistance League is all about," she said. "When home owners hear it's for clothing our Clatsop County kids, they're on board."

Warm jackets, socks, shoes, pajamas and underwear — these are basic clothing most people take for granted. But in Clatsop County there are hun-

dreds of school kids who don't have those basics. Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific's Operation School Bell program is all about providing clothes to kids in need. "No" or "can't" is not part of ALCP's vocabulary. The Home & Chef Tour is the nonprofit volunteer organization's major fundraiser for the year, and proceeds directly benefit Operation School Bell.

"Allowing us into a private home is a big deal. We don't take our hosts, our sponsors, our restaurants or any of the supporting participation we get from so many, lightly," said Davies, who is the head of the Home & Chef Tour. "It is a big deal, and we really appreciate it."

"But really, how can you say no, once you know this tour is all about supporting kids?"

The homes on this year's tour are listed below in alphabetical order. Their addresses, including Brim's Garden Center, are printed on the back of tour tickets (\$25), which are available at Holly McHone Jewelers in Astoria and at all Clatsop County branches of Columbia Bank. Tickets and a map of locations will also be available at participating homes on the day of the tour.

The Bergerson Home

David and Linda Bergerson's home displays an artist's eye throughout, from its bridged entryway to its open floor plan. Much of the timber came from 1950s movie star Tab Hunter's barn; he owned a horse ranch located just down the road. The residence was originally the Bergerson family's tile and stone business warehouse and mosaic art studio. Today it has evolved into a lived-in, homey mixed-media gallery.

Everything that could be recycled has been: stone and tile, wood, windows and more. David's degree in aeronautical engineering is evident in cantilevered planks, beams, interior bridges and a soaring center stairway. Handmade



From left, top row, Susan Wentworth, Mary Davies, Cheri Folk, Jane Cartwright, Shelby Mogenson and Pat Rothenburger; second row, Chris Holen, Loren Cross, Mary de la Salandra, Drake Radditz and Brian Burgess are pictured outside of Mary de la Salandra's home in Lewis and Clark. Built in 1912 by Mary Strong Kinney, the home is featured on Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific's Home & Garden Tour, set for Oct. 10.

furniture (dowels only please) from tables to doors handles feature the couple's attention to detail.

The outdoor kitchen and smokehouse is David's domain, where he smokes fish, cans and dries his provisions while Linda tends to a bountiful garden. "We're hunter-gatherers, doing our best to recycle and sustain," said David.

Drake Radditz of Radditz River Guide Services, will be the couple's guest chef during the tour.

The House Residence

The George and Marlene House house is lots of fun to say. It was designed by the couple and built in 1997 to purposely look like it's been comfortably nestled into its location for many years. A small blacksmithing sign, one of George's many hobbies, announces that you've arrived. The soft yellow exterior of the home is bordered by a walkway garden, showing off Marlene's master gardening skills and hinting at more to come in the backyard.



Mary de la Salandra stands outside her home in Lewis and Clark.

An expansive porch and ornate wooden front door open into a house filled with a vintage décor and a year-round Christmas tree.

"I've loved old stuff since I was 13 years old," Marlene said. "There's nothing new in our house except a relaxing tilt-back chair purchased for George's retirement."

The parlor's wood floors — bird's eye maple — came from the Tongue Point gym. "We designed, stained and placed everything in here," Marlene said. "In the garden room, our oldest daughter did the painting and our youngest the stenciling, and I took care of placing the old drinking fountain. Now our grandchildren ask when they can paint a wall."

When working on a home project, the couple employs local builders, craftsmen and upholsterers. "For our kitchen cabinets, I bought the knives we needed, and our woodworker carved the detailing while a local Astoria woman was making the stained glass to fit into them," Marlene enthused. "I love them."

Baked Alaska will serve food at the couple's home during the tour.

The Inman Farm

The first thing you notice when approaching Larry and Debbie Inman's home is a field full of 50 grazing Boer goats. The next is the expansive view of the Youngs Bay area, including the high peak of Saddle Mountain. In the lower pasture, a big red barn, built circa 1900, was once part of a

dairy; today it houses 50 red Angus cattle on the Inmans' working farm.

The couple's single-story country-style home, built in 1971, was purchased in 1992. Remodeling commenced immediately. Soaring ceilings, stone fireplaces, warm colors to cheer up winter's gray skies, and a massive rolltop desk from a Chicago railroad station (it was moved in and stayed put) add to the feel of a much-treasured and lived-in family home.

Outside, Debbie's gardening talent is evident, pond and fire pit included. "I love how, in the afternoon, the sun comes through the trees," she said. "When we moved here, there wasn't one plant. I got my love of the soil from my grandfather. I think I must channel him."

If you linger in the garden, don't be surprised if a curious goat or two come by to say hello. Also enjoy bites by Fulio's Pastaria, Steakhouse and Deli.

The Mary Kinney Estate

The 1912 Mary Kinney Estate — aka the Stone House — is a landmark in the Lewis and Clark area. Current owners Mary de la Salandra and her husband, Raymond Martin, bought the house in 2013 and are only the third owners of the residence.

"Every morning I wake up not quite believing that I get to live in this house!" said Mary. "It's a dream come true."

Designed by a widowed Mary Strong Kinney when she was 53 years old, the house has long had a reputation as one of the most extraordinary homes in Astoria. Built on a 100-acre parcel, it overlooks the Lewis and Clark Valley with a full view of the river. The four stories, plus an all-wood attic (which musician and owner Raymond has claimed for his music studio, finding the acoustics amazing) is in a 5,424-square-foot Craftsman style.

The house has four fireplaces, five bedrooms, original light fixtures and currently sits on a seven-acre wooded site. Virgin wood trim, some measuring 2-by-20 feet, is from the Kinney Mill. This wood, as wood lovers love to say, "you just can't get anymore"; it will make any wood appreciator's day.

Many of the stones built into the exterior reputedly came from passing ships. In the 19th century, cargo ships used stones as ballast, material that provides stability in wind and water (insufficiently ballasted boats can tip, heel or capsize).

Mary Strong Kinney, born in Salem in 1859, was widowed in 1898. She raised four sons, managed her late husband's saw mill near Astoria and never remarried. President of the Astoria Women's Suffrage Club, Kinney was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives in 1920, serving as the only woman in the legislature in 1921. She was later elected to the Oregon State Senate, serving from 1923 to 1925.

In the crash of 1929, Kinney lost her fortune and her Astoria home. The Stone House later sold in the 1930s for \$7,000 to Mary and Arthur Filiger, who, at the time, lived in Switzerland. Their children and family lived in the house for many years.



A large window provides ample light in the dining room of Ramona Pope and Brad Hunter's home.

During the Home & Chef Tour, attendees will find food served by Astoria Coffeehouse & Bistro.

The Pope Digs

The Ramona Pope and Brad Hunter house has survived many evolutions. Occupied by 10 different families over its nearly 100 years, the building was originally home to a fishing family.

"Rumor has it that the first family in our house was here before the dyke," said Ramona. "You came home by boat or over trails. There were no roads."

At another juncture it was the Battlecreek Chicken Farm. Plumbing was an outhouse until 1952.

During the tour, Beach Burrito will serve as guest chef for attendees.

The original house was just a small square. "We bought the house and four acres 26 years ago when the house had grown to 1,500 square feet and the land was valued at more than the house," Ramona said. "Today our home is a 3,000-square-foot, four-bedroom country home. We took walls down, bumped out bedrooms, doing nine remodeling projects over the years — along the way discovering old bottles and ancient newspapers in the walls."

"Sometimes we ask ourselves what we were thinking when we bought our house. Then we remember that we didn't see it like that. We saw our dreams."



The kitchen in Ramona Pope and Brad Hunter's Lewis and Clark home, which is part of the eighth annual Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific's Home & Chef Tour, taking place Saturday, Oct. 10.

Photos by Joshua Bessex