

LET THERE BE LIGHT!

IBEW Local 48 electricians keep with 31-year tradition by helping light up The Grotto light festival

Some 50 volunteers from IBEW Local 48 spent Saturday, Oct. 27, helping set up the temporary power for The Grotto's Christmas Festival of Lights. The Grotto is a Catholic shrine and botanical garden meant to provide spiritual inspiration.

Local 48 and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) have been involved with the distribution of power for the Festival of Lights since its inception in 1988. That first year the festival ran for just 10 nights with approximately 60,000 lights. It later ramped up to more than 500,000 lights. Last year, the festival switched to LEDs, boosting the light count to more than 1 million. The festival now runs from the day after Thanksgiving through Dec. 30.

The Grotto says its festival is the largest Christmas choral festival in the world. It features nearly 160 indoor holiday concerts performed by school, church, and civic choirs. The festival also has a petting zoo and holiday foods and beverages. More than 55,000 people attend the walk-through event each year.



The festival runs nightly from 5 to 9:30 p.m. through Dec. 30. General admission is \$12 for adults; \$11 for seniors 65 and over, and military personnel; \$6 for kids ages 3 to 12; and free for children 2 and under. Visitors are encouraged to bring a donation of canned or dry food benefitting Snow-Cap, the East county's affiliate of the Oregon Food Bank. Parking is free.

The Grotto is located at 8840 NE Skidmore St., Portland. The main entrance is located at NE 85th and Sandy Boulevard.



December dinner gift cards offered to those in need

Labor's Community Service Agency has announced a December Dinner Gift Card Program for unemployed union members and those facing difficult times. Referral forms are available for local union staff to fill out and send in. The agency will send those union members a grocery store food card (from a union grocer) that can be used to buy a holiday meal for the family. The deadline to send a referral is noon Dec. 14. For more information, or to obtain a referral form, contact Eryn Byram at 503-231-4962 or email programs@lcsaportland.org.

Machinists help foster teens

The Young Machinists of Local 63 are partnering with the Oregon Department of Human Services to bring Christmas to foster teens. Foster teens are a forgotten group that most toys drives don't cover. This year, the Young Machinists will provide a Christmas tree, a "want" gift, a "need" gift, and a stocking to 130 foster teens in the Gresham area. The Young Machinists are taking donations and/or selling Christmas trees to raise money for the event. To order a tree, call Scott Lacey at 503-490-2599 or Beth Lacey at 503-875-6306. A Go Fund Me page has been set up at gofundme.com/iam-ll63-foster-care-christmas.

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