

# Three Village Affaire

In the 1983 film “A Christmas Story,” young Ralphie can barely contain his excitement as the days inch closer to Dec. 25. “Christmas was on its way. Lovely, glorious, beautiful Christmas, upon which the entire kid year revolved,” he says.

If you’re like Ralphie and need an early dose of old-fashioned holiday cheer — and a quick sit-down with Santa — look no further than Manzanita, home of the fourth annual Three Village Affaire.

Held Thursday, Nov. 26 through Sunday, Nov. 29, the Three Village Affaire reaches back in time to rekindle memories of holidays past. Spearheaded by local merchants April Eckstrom and Darcey Kline, the event is also a celebration of the spirit of community that exists between Manzanita, Nehalem and Wheeler.

Eckstrom, who owns two Manzanita shops, Manzanita Sweets and Toylandia, thinks locals and visitors are seeking a return to more traditional holiday celebrations that involve the entire family. There is also the hope of engaging second homeowners in the community.

It was these notions that spurred Eckstrom to organize the first event in 2012.

“It’s a perfect fit, something I think everyone really wants more of this time of year,” she says. “They’re looking for that village feel.”

To that end, the event is packed full of nostalgic activities for kids of all ages: caroling along Laneda Avenue, a tree lighting and sing-along, and a gift market and trunk show.

There’s also a visit from Santa Claus, who arrives in grand style on



Submitted photo by Darcey Kline

The “Stocking Stuffer Shop-Hop Passport” helps shoppers get to know local retailers.

a bright red fire truck, courtesy of Nehalem Bay Fire and Rescue. He is, of course, available for gift requests and photos.

“Kids really love it; they absolutely go crazy,” Eckstrom says.

Naturally, kids play a major role in the event, as evidenced by Kids Night on Friday, Nov. 27. Here, area organizations set up tables and provide kids with a game or activity. It not only provides great entertainment for families, but introduces attendees to a variety of groups, including the Hoffman Center for the Arts, the Rinehart Clinic, and North Tillamook Library.

“It’s a great way for groups to let everyone know what they do,” Eckstrom says.

Kline adds that Kids Night gives second homeowners from the area a glimpse into the pieces that make up the community fabric.

The entire event seems to have taken on a life of its own as more people discover it, which has led to the addition of new events during the long Thanksgiving weekend.

That includes a “Turkey Trot” on Thanksgiving Day. Sponsored by



Submitted photo by Darcey Kline

Santa and Mrs. Claus pose with two “reindeer” at last year’s Three Village Affaire.



Submitted photo by Darcey Kline

Helpers get ready to welcome visitors to the Three Village Affaire gift market.

North County Recreation District, the 2.4-mile course is in the shape of a turkey, which participants can see using their GPS or smart phone.

There’s also a new pancake breakfast on Sunday, an event Eckstrom calls the perfect way to wrap up the weekend. “Everyone goes home full and happy,” she says.

A big part of the Three Village Affaire is showcasing area merchants and encouraging people to do their holiday shopping locally.

Kline, a realtor with Living Room Realty in Manzanita, has put together the “Stocking Stuffer Shop-Hop Passport.” Running from Nov. 15 through Dec. 15, the passport helps shoppers get to know local retailers.

Kline says involving merchants in the event is one of her favorite aspects. “I really love talking to the businesses about the passport and getting them excited about participating,” she says.

In all, at least 20 merchants from Manzanita, Nehalem and Wheeler

will take part. The month-long promotion allows patrons to collect stamps from businesses such as Cloud & Leaf Bookstore, Nehalem Beehive, and Old Wheeler Antiques.

There are two ways to win two grand prizes: collect a stamp from all 20 businesses without making a purchase, or get 10 stamps and purchase a minimum of \$15 at each business. After the passports are collected, a drawing will be held for a two-night stay with Manzanita Getaway Beach Rentals, or a one-night stay or five hours of cleaning from Sunset Vacation Rentals in Manzanita.

As if that weren’t enough, each of the 20 businesses on the passport route

## Three Village Affaire

www.threevillageaffaire.weebly.com

**Thursday, Nov. 26**

- 10 a.m. — Tri-Village Turkey Trot 2.4-mile walk/run

**Friday, Nov. 27**

*Old-Fashioned Holiday Celebration at Pine Grove Community Center:*

- 2:30 p.m. — Caroling with Sedona Fire Band on Laneda Avenue
- 5 to 8 p.m. — Kids Night Holiday Fun Faire with crafts
- 5:30 p.m. — Santa arrives on a firetruck, followed by pictures at Kids Night

- 6 p.m. — Tree lighting and sing along

**Saturday, Nov. 28**

- 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. — Three Village Market at Pine Grove Community Center with 20 vendors

- 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. — Three Village Trunk Show at NCRD in Nehalem with 30 vendors, kid’s bounce house and kid’s crafts

**Sunday, Nov. 29**

- 8 a.m. to noon — Pancake breakfast at Pine Grove Community Center, \$8 adults, \$5 kids

chip in a gift certificate to add to the winners’ haul.

“It’s been an incredible response; the communities have been very generous,” Kline says.

Much of the Three Village Affaire’s organization has been a grass-roots effort, something that both Kline and Eckstrom feel adds to the holiday spirit.

“The great variety of events and good intentions, it’s all been about giving back to the community,” Kline says.

# Coastal Life

Story by DAN HAAG