

But, as you can imagine, it doesn't come cheap.

A number of fundraisers occur throughout the year, but the organization's efforts culminate in a major year-end undertaking: the Annual Holiday Party and Fundraiser, taking place 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9, at the Fort George Lovell Showroom (1483 Duane St.).

It's become a beloved local tradition, but for those who have yet to attend, there are three main attractions.

First: the silent auction and raffle.

"We spend a lot of time reaching out to businesses, organizations and individuals throughout the county, and our volunteers go out and collect items to be given away at the event," CAA President and Director Marcy Dunning said. "A lot of them have donated before — hotels and restaurants and businesses of all sizes."

A \$10 raffle ticket makes you eligible for one of three major prizes: a brand-new, punch red Fire 32 GB tablet, a day at Disneyland for four, or, perhaps most excitingly, a round-trip ride for two with a bar pilot, including a chance to observe a boarding procedure, lunch with the pilot and a tour of the office.

Second: the bake sale.

No small endeavor in itself; there will be enough cookies, breads, cakes, pies, jams, fudge and caramels on hand to keep you from having to do any holiday baking of your own.

"The bake sale people have been working since late spring," Dunning said. "It's unbelievable."

And don't think these treats are strictly for humans — one of the major attractions is The Doggie Cake, a turkey version of carrot cake topped with mashed potato icing.

Third: pet portraits with Santa.

All attendees are encouraged to dress up their own domestic beasts for a photo op with Saint Nick. "It's usually dogs, of course, but we do get the occasional cat, and one year, someone brought a ferret," Dunning said, laughing. "Our Santa is a very patient man."

### Huge but rewarding

Since 1999, the all-volunteer organization has dedicated itself to helping the canine and feline residents of the Clatsop County Animal Shelter, with the goal of making their stay as temporary as possible.

"Our mission is to help the shelter animals get adopted," Dunning said. "That entails making sure they get the medical care that they need, as well as helping the county promote the animals so they can hopefully find homes sooner."

More than 90 percent of Clatsop



COURTESY MARCY DUNNING

Santa watches the browsers during the 2014 Clatsop Animal Assistance Holiday Party and Fundraiser at the Fort George Lovell Showroom.



HUGH MCKENNA PHOTO

Linda Perkins, foreground, restocks the table while Judy Kraft waits on a customer at the bake sale at the 2013 Annual Holiday Party and Fundraiser Saturday for Clatsop Animal Assistance.

Animal Assistance's yearly income goes straight to the dogs (and cats): veterinary care, spay/neuter certificates, supplies, training and adoption advertising and

promotion, much of it not covered by the shelter's budget.

The majority of CAA's support and revenue derives from the Annual Holiday

### IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** Clatsop Animal Assistance Annual Holiday Party and Fundraiser

**WHEN:** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9

**WHERE:** Fort George Lovell Showroom (1483 Duane St.)

Party, but just as crucial to their success is the hard work and devotion of their volunteers, donors and organizers.

"The Fort George has been very generous with their space for the last several years," Dunning said. "And we've got a whole crew who will be working the entire day before getting everything set up, then another group who will be there all Saturday to work the event, then another to break things down and distribute prizes afterwards, and then we spend the next month sending out thank-yous and taking care of the back end, so it's a huge endeavor, but it's so rewarding.

"And that's because we have a wonderful community, so many people who donate their time, their space and their energy throughout the year," she continued. "I want to make sure they know how very grateful we are to all of them." 