

COOS BAY

Hit the lights

*Shore Acres' holiday display
open through New Year's*

**More than 325,000
LED lights make up
this year's display.**

COURTESY PHOTO

The 29th annual Holiday Lights at Shore Acres State Park opened Thanksgiving Day and continues every night through New Year's Eve, Dec. 31. This walk-through display with its beautiful lighted formal gardens continues to attract thousands of visitors each season.

The garden house, beautifully decorated in a traditional holiday theme, has friendly volunteer hosts from many organizations, businesses and the Friends serving hot cider, punch, coffee and cookies from 4 to 9:30 p.m. every night, including Christmas Eve, Christmas and New Year's Eve.

Choirs, carolers and bands offer entertainment in the performance pavilion. The Information and Gift Center,

reminiscent of L. J. Simpson's original mansion, is open every night. And there's plenty of parking for both cars and buses.

Almost all of this year's display will feature LED lights, garden landscape lighting, 26 large holiday trees decorated by various organizations and businesses, and dozens of lighted sculptures that include the Shore Acres' herons, life-size whales, animated sea lions, an undersea garden, flowers, garden bugs, butterflies, fuchsia flower and animated hummingbird; Koi under water in the pond, a lighthouse, an animated bumble bee, a leaping frog in the pond, and more.

New for 2015 — animated seagulls in the entrance and animated small red crabs in the undersea garden.

Exciting holiday gifts and raffle tickets for the "Ultimate Bed and Breakfast" are available in the Friends' Information and Gift Center. The B&B is an overnight stay for two adults in the Garden House on New Year's Eve with a special catered breakfast the next morning. Tickets are \$10 each (only 200 will be sold) with the drawing to be held at 4 p.m. on Christmas Day. Ticket holder does not need to be present to win.

The holiday lights event became an instant community tradition in 1987 when the Friends of Shore Acres in cooperation with Shore Acres State Park decided to

"string a few lights" to help celebrate the holidays. That first season, 6,000 miniature lights, one Christmas tree, and the open Garden House drew 9,000 visitors.

Now, at least 325,000 lights — both holiday and landscaping — dozens of Christmas trees, lighted sculptures, a performance pavilion and the beautifully decorated garden house attract 40,000 to 50,000 visitors each season.

Inside the Garden House, long scrolls of names pay tribute to the business supporters, Friends' members, park staff and the more than 1,500 volunteers who make it happen for all to enjoy.

Shore Acres State Park is located at 89039 Cape Arago Highway, Coos Bay, (13 miles southwest of the cities of Coos Bay/North Bend).

Admission is a parking fee of \$5 per vehicle or a current OPRD Annual Parking Permit or Coastal Passport or current state park campground receipt.

The Friends welcome donations for refreshments and for continuing the event the following year.

For more information, call Bridgham's at 541-756-5401, Shore Acres State Park at 541-888-3732, or Bay Area Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-824-8486 or 541-269-0215. Or, visit the Friends' website at www.shoreacres.net.