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# Holidays

IN THE COUVE

NOVEMBER 2024

**The Columbian**



# Living

IN THE COUVE

*What is The Couve?*

**The Couve** geographical name

\ 'thē cōv \ rhymes with 'move'

(noun)

**1** —Nickname for Vancouver, Washington.

**2** —The original Vancouver.

**3** —A small city with vibrant communities, urban attractions, and natural recreation areas.

**See Also:** Greater Couve, Clark County, Southwest Washington

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Find past issues archived online at  
[www.livinginthecouve.com](http://www.livinginthecouve.com)



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# Shopping Local – *Holidays in the Couve*

With the holidays quickly approaching, we've put together a section filled with local shops and places to support this holiday season. Throughout these pages, you'll find articles from local companies, like Backyard Bird Shop and Clark County Green Neighbors, a shop local gift guide, and places to help with your holiday planning. We've included a section of Best of Clark County winners, which are businesses in Clark County that have been voted as the best by the community, as well as a list of local events that you can check out.

We encourage you this year to help support the local community by shopping locally. Local businesses often sponsor local sports teams and events, donate to different charities, and help fund the community in various other ways. By supporting these businesses, you are, in turn, supporting the local community as well as encouraging entrepreneurship within Clark County. If you are looking for a gift, you can often find something unique at a local business. Personally, I sometimes find it hard to come up with gift ideas for everyone on my list; however, when I browse a local shop, I often find gifts that I know someone would love since it's not something that you can find at a big-box store. Whether you want to experience the local culture, support the local economy and community, or find one-of-a-kind gifts, I hope your holiday season is special.

*Happy Holidays!*

*Ashlyn Madani*



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IT'S THE *Most Wonderful Time* OF THE YEAR  
TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

by TODD KAPRAL, *Backyard Bird Shop*

*F*all has finally arrived and the holidays are fast approaching. Our long dry summer has finally given way to cooler temperatures and rain. The past few years have spurred lots of folks to find wild bird feeding for the first time, which was wonderful to see. We continue to see and hear from all the people who are new to feeding tell us about seeing their first goldfinch or hummingbird at their feeder. Many of these new birders are amazed how easy it is to encourage nature right outside their window and often report to us that watching the birds at their feeders can be very therapeutic. I happen to agree.

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Our ability to meet the needs of all these new birders in addition to all our wonderful long-time customers is made possible largely due to our philosophy of supporting small, local or U.S. artisans and craftspeople. From bird feeders, houses and baths to a multitude of nature-related gifts, dozens of the local and U.S. suppliers we support are able to keep our shelves stocked with unique, well-made items that can be hard to find at national chain stores or online. At our stores, you can find gifts that include wall art, jewelry, cards, statuary, chimes, candles and more -- all from local or U.S. artisans. Additionally, I have found that dealing with local artists and companies often allows flexibility that you can't find elsewhere.

Some common feedback we get is that people appreciate being able to come into a store and actually see and touch an item or have a personal conversation with knowledgeable staff. This is an experience you cannot get from a computer. My wife and I recently took a road trip around Washington State and got to see these thriving small businesses in action in each place we stayed at. Our interactions with many of these shops highlighted the personal aspect these places bring to the local business community.

You can find small, local businesses in practically every part of town. These stores serve the needs of their community with knowledge and expertise that might be scarce at big box stores. From downtown Vancouver to Camas, Washougal, Battle Ground and beyond, as I visit these stores and speak to the folks that work and own them, this "shop local" mindset exists there as well. There is a level of dedication, passion, and common interest with customers that inhabit most small business participants. This often shows through in the feel of the store and

the depth of knowledge you encounter.

Also, keep in mind that when you shop at a locally owned and operated business, you are helping your dollars stay in the community. The owners and employees will in turn spend their dollars at local restaurants and shops, and on family activities. Additionally, you are also supporting that store's local supply chain. At Backyard Bird Shop, our business suppliers include advertisers, printers, hardware and lumber for displays, computer and tech support, and more which all come together to create a unique and immersive shopping experience. We also believe in the importance of giving back to the community by supporting numerous environmental and educational organizations. You can find out more information about our stores by visiting [backyardbirdshop.com](http://backyardbirdshop.com)

**This holiday season and throughout the year, please consider shopping local first. You will likely be rewarded with an in-depth experience that will make it worth the trip. From our flock to yours, may your holidays be merry and bright.**



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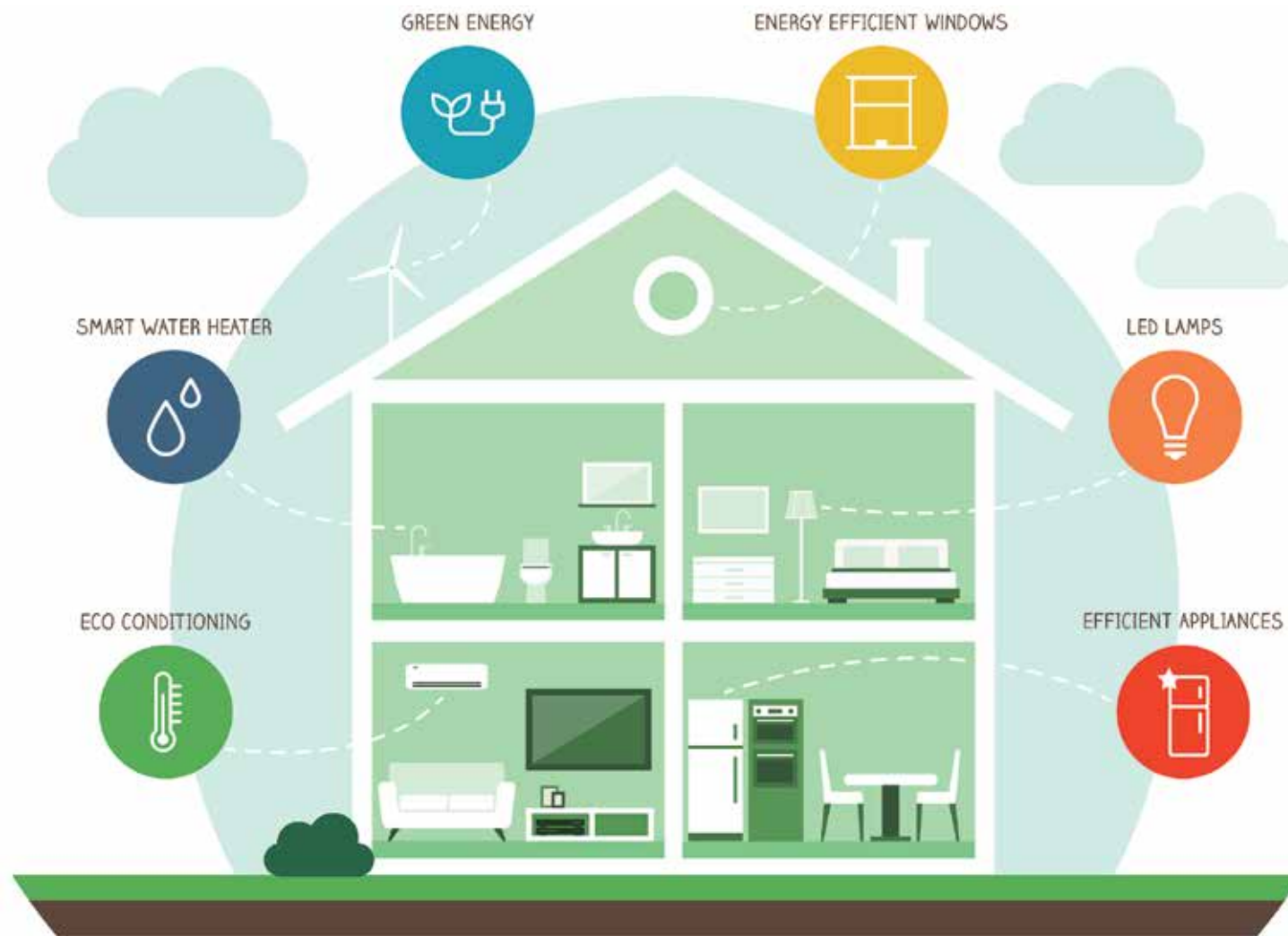
Offer valid Nov. 29-Dec. 1, 2024 only.

\*Excludes seed, suet and other food items. Not applicable to Brome Squirrel Buster products. Coupon must be presented at time of purchase and is good for in stock items only. Coupon cannot be combined with other coupons or discounts or used to purchase gift cards.



[BackyardBirdShop.com](http://BackyardBirdShop.com)

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# Combine Energy Saving Federal Tax Credits with Rebates from Clark Public Utilities

by **DAMEON PESANTI**,  
Public Information Office at Clark Public Utilities

Home or commercial improvement projects are rarely cheap, even when the price comes in at a relative bargain. But property owners have an opportunity to reduce their federal tax bill while also making their energy efficiency projects more affordable. Plus, in many cases, the savings can be combined with rebates and incentives offered by Clark Public Utilities.

Homeowners or property owners who complete projects before the end of the year may be able to

receive the tax benefits when they file their 2024 federal taxes in a few months.

The federal Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 was a wide-reaching piece of legislation. The section most relevant to property owners looking to recoup their energy efficiency investments is section 25C: Energy Efficient Home Improvement Tax Credit. That part of the law created tax credits and deductions that make it more affordable to invest in technologies that reduce energy waste and maximize personal comfort year-round.

Commercial building owners aren't left out, either. Section 179D of the law allows commercial building owners or lessees to deduct the cost or a portion of the cost to install energy-efficient improvements. To be eligible, the installation of energy efficient property must reduce annual energy costs by at least 25 percent.

Combining those benefits with rebates and incentives offered by Clark Public Utilities could drive the cost down even further.

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“Property owners don’t need to feel rushed, if this is the first they’re hearing of these tax credits. They will be in place until 2032,” said Clark Public Utilities Residential Programs Manager Trevor Frick. “If you’ve been on the fence about making an upgrade for a while, this could be the right financial incentive to make your move now. Otherwise, take your time and plan a project that’ll fit your property best and tailor it to qualify for all the right incentives.”

The residential tax credits can cover up to 30 percent of the costs of the upgrade across a wide number of qualifying products and energy efficiency-related projects. There are cost caps per upgrade and an annual maximum of \$3,200, but there is no lifetime dollar limit to the credit. The credit isn’t a refund. It’s only to reduce the amount of taxes you owe. Also, in most cases, the home you’re upgrading must be your primary residence. Landlords or other property owners who don’t live in the home may qualify, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

New construction homes are also included. The law includes a tax credit for builders of new single-family, manufactured and multifamily buildings — adding an incentive to spring for the more efficient appliances and features for your new home.

The tax credit includes an expansive list of eligible projects that are common when upgrading an older home. Projects like insulation installation, replacement windows, heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, solar energy systems and even electric panel upgrades are eligible.

For example, a qualifying heat pump water heater may be eligible for a tax credit of up to 30 percent of the project cost up to \$2,000. If replacing an electric water heater with a qualifying heat pump water heater you may also be eligible for the Clark Public Utilities \$700 rebate.

However, not every product in each category will qualify. That’s why it’s good to speak with an expert, especially the contractor you’re considering hiring for the job.

To be eligible for incentives or rebates from Clark Public Utilities, the work must be done in an electrically heated home by a contractor included in the utility’s contractor network, in addition to other qualifications.

Owners of commercial buildings may qualify for tax deductions when reducing energy usage through upgrades to heating, cooling, and ventilation equipment or when upgrading water heaters and interior lighting.

Taxpayers can receive a deduction of \$2.50 to \$5 per

square foot, depending on the energy saved. The energy savings are based on measurements of the building’s energy consumption over the year before and after the work was done.

Whether you’re a homeowner or a commercial property owner or manager, Clark Public Utilities may have incentives and rebates to help you reduce energy waste and control utility expenses.

Residential customers can speak with an Energy Counselor for guidance on reducing home energy waste with no- and low-cost practices or help understanding which energy efficiency investments may give the most value for their dollar.

Clark Public Utilities gives every business customer a dedicated account manager. Call yours or 360-992-3000 to connect with them and learn about the numerous opportunities to lower your costs, improve the safety and comfort of your facilities, and upgrade to more efficient equipment.

Information on incentives, rebates and specific programs for both residential and commercial customers is available at [clarkpublicutilities.com](http://clarkpublicutilities.com).

**For full details on the federal tax credits visit: [energystar.gov/about/federal\\_tax\\_credits](http://energystar.gov/about/federal_tax_credits).**



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# GREEN TIDINGS WE BRING: A GUIDE TO HOLIDAY WASTE DISPOSAL

by **BETHANIE COLLETTE**, Clark County Green Neighbors

As the holidays approach with the promise of twinkling lights and festivities, we at Clark County Green Neighbors want to provide you with the tools you need to celebrate sustainably. This year, we're unwrapping the secrets to managing holiday waste with grace!

## POWERING UP YOUR HOLIDAYS: THE BATTERY DILEMMA

We've all been there, frantically searching for batteries to bring

those new toys to life. But before you toss your old batteries in the trash or recycling, hear this! Improper disposal can lead to more than just a lump of coal in your stocking; batteries have the potential to start fires that are incredibly difficult to extinguish once they've begun. Fear not, the Clark County Battery Drop-Off program offers free, safe disposal options for all of those spent batteries from holidays past. With convenient locations accepting up to 10 batteries per person daily, battery recycling has never been easier. Go to [RecyclingA-Z.com](https://www.recyclinga-z.com) or download the RecycleRight app and search by battery type to find a nearby drop-off location!

Got a stockpile? No worries! Just swing by a county transfer station during household hazardous waste hours. Go to [RecyclingA-Z.com](https://www.recyclinga-z.com) to find a transfer station near you.

## FOAM, BUBBLES, AND LIGHTS, OH MY!

Speaking of gifts, let's talk about the mountain of block foam, bubble wrap, and air pillows that seem to multiply overnight. These products are not accepted for curbside recycling in Clark County. And those twinkling string lights that have seen better days? They may light up your home, but they can darken a recycler's day if they end up in your recycling bin. But never fear, Clark County Green Neighbors is here for all of your holiday waste recycling needs! To find recycling options for block foam, bubble wrap, air pillows, and string lights, go to [RecyclingA-Z.com](https://www.recyclinga-z.com) or the RecycleRight app to find a recycler near you.

## NEW GADGETS IN, OLD GADGETS OUT

As you unbox the latest tech marvels, remember their predecessors. Those old electronics deserve better than a lonely existence in a landfill. Spread the joy by donating usable items to local thrift stores. For those beyond repair, specialty recyclers listed in the RecycleRight app and Clark County transfer stations are ready to work their magic!

## THE BIG, THE BULKY AND THE BEAUTIFUL

Do you have a sofa that's seen one too many holiday parties? Before you wrestle it to the curb, consider its future. Usable items can find new homes through donation. Some locations, like Habitat for Humanity, offer pick-up services! For bulky items that have truly earned their retirement, Waste Connections' bulky item pick up is your friend. City of Vancouver residents, you're in luck, free pick-up is just a tap away on the RecycleRight app.

## FEAST, WITHOUT THE WASTE

Did you know that Washington state generates a whopping 400,000 tons of edible food waste annually? This holiday season let's turn the tables on waste. Start with smart shopping. Channel your inner Santa and make a list (and check it twice!) to avoid overbuying. Get creative with leftovers; those mashed potatoes could be tomorrow's potato pancakes. And when all else fails, remember compost is king. Clark County's We Compost program is ready to transform your scraps into garden gold, for free! Go to [ClarkGreenNeighbors.org/We-Compost](https://www.clarkgreeneighbors.org/we-compost) to find a community hub near you. If you live in the City of Vancouver or Ridgefield and have an organics cart, put your food scraps in it!

## O CHRISTMAS TREE, O CHRISTMAS TREE

When it's time to bid farewell to your festive fir, we're here to ensure your tree is given its maximum life. If you have a curbside yard debris or organics service, cut your tree into sections of 5 feet or less and put them inside of your cart. Don't have a yard debris or organics cart? The Boy Scouts of America will pick up your tree for free on the first Saturday of January; go to [ScoutTreeRecycling.com](https://www.scouttreerecycling.com) for more information. Several self-haul options will accept your tree for a small fee; search for "Christmas trees" at [RecyclingA-Z.com](https://www.recyclinga-z.com) or use the RecycleRight app for addresses and hours.

**green NEIGHBORS**

# BATTERY DROP-OFF

**PREP:**  
Tape ends or individually bag

**FIND:**  
Go to [RecyclingA-Z.com](https://www.recyclinga-z.com) and search "batteries" to find a drop-off location near you

**DROP OFF:**  
Drop your batteries off for recycling and festivities free of fire risks!

Battery drop-off information for Clark County residents including preparation steps and drop-off locator (graphic by Bethanie Collette).



Continued on next page ▶



Want more ideas for repurposing those old branches and needles? Check out our ideas for reuse below.

Trying to shed some artificial pine leaves? For old artificial trees, consider donating to a local thrift store or posting them for free in "Buy Nothing" group on Facebook. Remember, these trees can't go in your recycling or organics carts!

**CHEERS TO A HOLIDAY SEASON THAT'S MERRY, BRIGHT AND OH-SO-GREEN!**

As you dive into the holiday festivities, remember that every small action you take toward reducing your waste and disposing of it correctly adds up to a big impact. For more sustainable living inspiration, sign up for the Green Neighbors newsletter at [ClarkGreenNeighbors.org/Latest-Newsletters](http://ClarkGreenNeighbors.org/Latest-Newsletters).



Pine tree creativity: craft ideas to promote reuse of trees following the holidays (graphic by Bethanie Collette).

# Shop smart this holiday season

Check out the Green Business Directory to learn about sustainable businesses in Clark County:

[Clarkgreenbiz.com/directory](http://Clarkgreenbiz.com/directory)





# MULCH

Your way to a healthier, more attractive and productive garden



by LIZ PIKE, WSU Clark County Master Gardener

Most gardeners add mulch to their garden beds because it dramatically improves the beauty of landscaped areas by creating a uniform look and defined spaces. Its neat appearance against a lawn helps prevent grass from growing into the mulched areas. And there is nothing quite like the delightful scent of fresh hemlock bark chips in the garden. While these are fine reasons to apply mulch, there are so many other great benefits of this garden practice.

Joe the Gardener famously says, "Mulch is to the soil above ground, what compost is to plants below the ground."

Mulching is like giving your plants a protective hug, keeping them safe from temperature changes and hot, thirsty days. Mulch keeps your soil cozy and

damp, making for happier plants. And, that dampness attracts red wiggler worms to your soil. It's not just about making your garden look great; it's about creating a healthy growing environment where your plants can thrive!

Adding mulch saves water. Mulch reduces soil moisture loss through evaporation. It also reduces the soil's exposure to wind which pulls water from the soil. The insulating quality of mulch helps to keep the soil cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

Mulch also protects soil from erosion, stabilizing the soil below and counteracting the influences of rainfall, snowmelt, and wind on bare soil.

As mulch decomposes over time, it adds nutrients to the soil below. Aging, organic mulches promote



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healthy soil, which in turn, helps fend off disease. Bark or wood chips are an ideal mulch that doubles as a soil amendment over the long term. And they help improve clay soil after several years of annual application.

One of the best benefits of mulch is its weed suppression capability because it acts as a barrier to weed growth. Two or three inches of mulch applied each year is all that's needed to help prevent many future weeds. For optimum weed control, add mulch annually.

There's no doubt our climate is changing in Southwest Washington. Our summers are a little hotter for longer periods of time and we have a few extreme cold spells during winter months. Adding mulch to your garden beds moderates temperature extremes by providing an insulating barrier between the soil and the air. Mulched soil stays cooler in the summer and in winter, a mulched bed has a better chance of not freezing.

Mulch can be applied any time of year. However, spring and autumn are the ideal times to do so. When applying mulch in the spring, be sure to wait until the soil has warmed up and before weeds begin to emerge. Applying mulch before the ground has thawed may delay the soil warming in the spring.

Mulching in the fall protects the roots of new plants from the cold winter ahead. There's more time



to mulch in the fall after the garden season is over. Spring is a busy time of year; most gardeners are busy planting, pruning and spreading seeds, so there's not much time to mulch! Plus, it is easier to apply mulch after perennials have been cut back in the fall. Mulch can also be used as an attractive cover over meandering garden paths.

The only downside to mulching is the cost. But for the busy gardener with lots to do, and not enough hours in the day, the tradeoff in time saving from weeding chores seems well worth the added expense.



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# VANCOUVER CLINIC INTRODUCES INNOVATIVE MEDICAL ASSISTANT JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

by SUZANNE SPARHAWK, Senior Recruiter, Vancouver Clinic

Medical assistants (MAs) are an essential part of health care teams. They collect information from patients, assist during procedures, gather specimens, give immunizations, and more.

They are also in high demand. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, employment of medical assistants is projected to grow 15 percent from 2023 to 2033. That's equivalent to about 119,800 openings each year.

Like other health care positions, including physicians and nurses, there is a shortage of individuals to fill these spots. Hiring enough qualified people is challenging.

Vancouver Clinic's innovative MA in Training Program is designed to help fill the gap, enabling the clinic to continue delivering excellent patient care.



Mary Hughes practices looking at the throat of fellow classmate Chris Ebeling. Medical assistant trainees learn what area of the throat to swab for strep and other tests.



Destiny Barnette and Sarah Sweeney, clinical nurse educators, demonstrate how to look for tonsils while students look on.

The program offers a fully paid, 16-week training period, during which employees learn and practice all the skills they need to become registered medical assistants. Trainees spend part of their week in online coursework, where they learn medical processes and terminology. Clinical nurse educators teach hands-on practicums, where they rehearse everything from responding to a medical emergency to drawing shots to taking someone's blood pressure.

After their classroom experience, employees complete a 160-hour clinical rotation, guided by one of the clinic's exceptional medical assistant preceptors.

This comprehensive education and training prepares them to tackle the National Healthcareer Association Certified Clinical Medical Assistant Exam. Once



Mary Hughes practices taking off her personal protective equipment (PPE). All health care workers put on and take off PPE in a specific order to minimize the risk of exposure to infectious materials.

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credentialed, they have a job waiting for them—an MA-Registered 2 position within a clinic department. As a part of the program, employees commit to a two-year service agreement.

The first cohort of five individuals graduated the program in June. They are now working across the organization in Family Medicine, Podiatry, and Orthopedics. The second group of five will graduate in early December.

In 2025, the program will open to applications for our third cohort. Given the program's success, we anticipate inviting a class of 12 to join the next group.

If you step inside the MA classroom, you can feel the energy and commitment of our trainees and educators. On this day, they are practicing how to respond to an emergency situation with a patient. As the educators set up the scenario, the trainees quietly start choosing who will grab the defibrillator, who will log vitals, etc. In an actual emergency, it's impossible to pre-plan roles, so the educators chuckle. But they appreciate the bigger truth: These future MAs care deeply about getting it right. They already feel the responsibility that comes with their new role. At Vancouver Clinic, we believe that caring for people is our first priority. In this room, every individual is bringing that belief to life.

"It's incredibly gratifying to teach people these clinical skills and watch them develop into knowledgeable, thoughtful MAs who support patients with expertise and compassion," says Destiny Barnette, lead clinical nurse educator.



Kayla Garcia takes the blood pressure of an instructor during a hands-on practicum.

If you or someone you know is interested in applying to join a future cohort, please watch the Vancouver Clinic facebook page for application dates.

*Suzanne Sparhawk, senior recruiter at Vancouver Clinic, leads MA in Training Program enrollment.*



Mahwish Aqeel performs chest compressions while Kayla Garcia provides oxygen in this emergency simulation of a patient experiencing a heart attack. All medical assistants are trained to use an automated external defibrillator.



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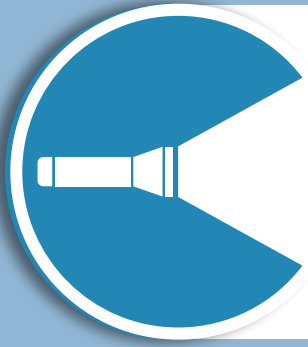


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# NONPROFIT *Spotlight*



For information contact [communitypartnerships@columbian.com](mailto:communitypartnerships@columbian.com)



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# Shine On!

Through a combination of giving and governance, **David and Patricia Nierenberg** have helped transform animal welfare, education and healthcare in southwest Washington.

Along the way, they also lifted the trajectory of local philanthropy by giving to and through the Community Foundation. Every gift is personal and each ties back to their belief that healthy communities are built through local investment.

*"We believe giving defines what a good community is."*

**DAVID NIERENBERG**



**The Community Foundation helps transform purpose into impact.**

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## Camas Couple Gives to Build a Shining Community

A new mom rests easy while a neonatal incubator cradles her child at PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center. An innovative high school teacher receives a grant for classroom supplies from the Evergreen School District Foundation. A loving family adopts a senior dog after a life-saving journey to the Humane Society for Southwest Washington.

These are moments that David and Patricia Nierenberg have helped make possible by contributing to Clark County causes for nearly three decades. While their major gifts make headlines—like a recent \$20 million pledge to PeaceHealth's emergency department expansion and Community Health Hub—David and Patricia's behind-the-scenes service is just as bold.

The Camas couple rolls up their sleeves for the causes they support. Patricia has served on the Humane Society board for over two decades, helping the organization strengthen its governance and build a new facility. David has played similar roles, including an effort that helped reorganize the Evergreen School District Foundation and raise \$1 million for classroom technology.

While it seems to come naturally, David describes giving as a lot of trial and error. That's why he and Patricia opened a Donor Advised Fund at the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington early on. Beyond providing a convenient way to give, the organization has become their hub for local impact, connecting them with like-minded people who want to address community issues at scale.

"I believe that the Community Foundation enables southwest Washington to be that proverbial city on the hill," David said. "A giving community, a connected community, a compassionate community."

The reference is no coincidence. The Nierenbergs are also guided by their faith. David is Jewish; Patricia is Roman Catholic. Their views on the afterlife may be worlds apart, but the one heaven they both aspire toward is creating one here on Earth—a healthy, flourishing community in southwest Washington.

For David and Patricia, this means a place where people of all circumstances work together to solve problems and create opportunities, and they believe the Community Foundation is building this future. To fuel its efforts, they recently provided a \$40,000 matching gift for its Administrative Endowment in honor of the organization's 40th anniversary. The gift isn't their first to the fund, and it won't be the last according to David.

This critical fund supports the organization's work to inspire giving, build community and elevate local solutions. You can learn more about the fund by visiting [cfsww.org/flourishing-future](http://cfsww.org/flourishing-future).

# BEST OF CLARK COUNTY 2024

Visit local small businesses for your *Holiday Shopping!*

Small Business Saturday is an annual national shopping day that takes place the Saturday after Thanksgiving. It's a great incentive to celebrate and support small businesses in your local community. There are many small businesses in and around Vancouver to help you complete your holiday shopping list. Instead of ordering online, consider going out to browse locally for the perfect gift, or if you're not sure, most small shops have gift certificates for sale.

Looking for the best gifts from small businesses in Clark County? The Columbian's Best of Clark County can help you decide among all the great eateries, shops, services and entertainment venues that our community has to offer.

**Join us on Saturday, November 30 in celebrating all of the Clark County small businesses that make our community great. Show your support by shopping and utilizing the services of our outstanding businesses.**





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# BEST OF CLARK COUNTY 2024

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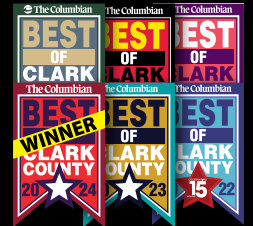


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# VANCOUVER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA USA



## 2024-2025 season schedule

Symphony performances at Skyview Concert Hall

Chamber music series performances at First Presbyterian Church, Kiggins Theatre and Joyce Garver Theater

<b>November 21</b>	<i>Chamber music series</i> Back to the Movies: Blackmail
<b>December 14 -15</b>	<i>Symphonic series</i> VSO Holiday Pops
<b>January 16</b>	<i>Chamber music series</i> Back to the Movies: Why Be Good?
<b>January 25-26</b>	<i>Symphonic series</i> Young Artist Showcase
<b>February 7</b>	<i>Chamber music series</i> VSO Chamber Ensemble: The Love of Music
<b>February 22-23</b>	<i>Symphonic series</i> Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique
<b>March 8-9</b>	<i>Chamber music series</i> VSO Chamber Ensemble: Mozart Gran Partita
<b>April 12-13</b>	<i>Symphonic series</i> Rimsky Korsakov's Scheherazade
<b>April 17</b>	<i>Chamber music series</i> Back to the Movies: The Cameraman
<b>May 18</b>	<i>Chamber music series</i> VSO Chamber Orchestra with Philippe Quint
<b>May 31 - June 1</b>	<i>Symphonic series</i> Stravinsky's The Rite of Spring

## Help us uplift the community

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (VSO) is committed to bringing world-class music to the community throughout the year. In addition to regularly performing symphonic and chamber music concerts, a silent film series, and co-presenting and performing at the Vancouver USA Arts and Music Festival (VAMF), the VSO education program:

- Hosts student concerts;
- Performs at school assemblies;
- Sends Maestro Salvador Brotons to local classrooms to work with school orchestras and bands;
- Holds master classes for aspiring musicians;
- Presents comprehensive educational programming at VAMF 2025; and
- Offers free and discounted student tickets.

To learn more about upcoming VSO performances or the education program, contact:  
[development@vancouversymphony.org](mailto:development@vancouversymphony.org)

## Special Holiday Offer

Give the gift of music—to yourself or someone else! Receive a **25% discount** on your ticket purchase for any of the following performances:

January 25-26: Young Artist Showcase | February 7: The Love of Music  
February 22-23: Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique | March 8-9: Mozart Gran Partita

Use discount code **VSO25HNP** at checkout at [vancouversymphony.org](http://vancouversymphony.org)  
(or use QR code at left) or call 360.735.7278





# Holiday

## PARTY PLANNING

by EILEEN COWEN, for *The Columbian*

The holidays are coming up and for many of us, that means parties and gatherings. Many large events were put on hold over the last four years, but this year things seem to be in full swing. Although these holiday gatherings can be super fun and full of love, they can also be super stressful and full of hard work for those hosting. Even the small events require basics like food and entertainment. Thankfully, there are ways to make your party planning even easier by using some of the Couve's best caterers and entertainers. The good news is, you can book many of them online for even easier event planning. Remember to book them early so your party goes off without a hitch this holiday season!

First up is food. The Couve is home to some amazing caterers with extensive food options and even special accommodations for allergies and food aversions. Bleu Door Bakery specializes in vegan and omnivore cuisine, and it goes without saying, their baked goods are some of the best in the region. The success of their shop on Main Street in Vancouver is all you need to know about Bleu Door – the food is delicious and well worth the wait. Viva Brunch!

Simply Thyme is another well respected caterer and for good reason. Chef Tammy Liebfarth has been cooking professionally for decades and her catering team is well versed in many different styles of cooking. To top it off, Chef Tammy uses local and foraged ingredients to create meals that highlight all the Pacific Northwest has to offer.

Say Ciao! is another caterer that has a brick-and-mortar shop owned by Chef Peter Gallin. The catering offerings are creative and vibrant, with a special attention to presentation. What sets Say Ciao! apart is

that you can rent their restaurant space for intimate catered events. Imagine hosting a fun party and not having to worry about the cleanup!

Butterface Catering is a newcomer to the scene. Chef Cara Wade has 15 years of chef experience, including her time cooking for a local charter school. It goes without saying that this lady knows her lunches. Her menu is full of delicious offerings that focus on allergen-free meals for all ages. You can even order individually packaged meals online from Butterface Catering and have them delivered to your door. This is a great option for a smaller event where a full catering menu is not required.

Now that you have food covered for your event, the next step is providing some entertainment for your guests. There are many professional musicians in the Greater Couve, but unless you know someone who is a musician, hiring someone may seem to be a daunting effort. A website called Gig Salad aims to make that effort much easier. You can search the site for all sorts of local musicians based in Vancouver, Camas, Battleground, and more. The website matches location and musical style to your specific requests and provides booking details through the website. It is a convenient way to peruse the available musical acts and decide the musical style that will make your

holiday party a hit.

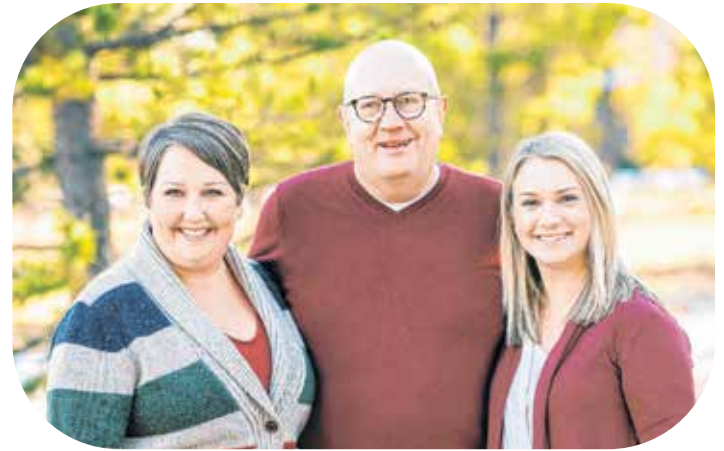
With food and music under control, all you need to do now is enjoy your holiday gathering while reveling in the friendship and camaraderie that the holiday season offers, knowing that you are also supporting businesses and musicians that make our community thrive.

*Happy holidays!*



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- Preserve longstanding traditions and customs

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- Reach out to the greater community

We believe that the success of any business requires dedication and professionalism. In our business, in particular, it also requires a great deal of kindness, compassion and attention to detail. You'll find these qualities in each and every member of our staff at Evergreen Memorial Gardens. Put your trust in us to make this experience as comfortable and carefree as possible.



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## WINTER GARDEN CHORES

by EMILY SHUE, WSU Extension Clark County Master Gardener

Winter offers a well-earned break from gardening and yardwork, but it's also the perfect time to prep for the next growing season. Here's a list of winter chores to keep your garden in top shape for the new year.



Apply mulch, compost and/or manure to annual beds to help build and enrich the soil for next year's plantings.



If you haven't already, make sure your spring-flowering bulbs are in the ground. Typically, these bulbs should be planted 6 weeks before the soil begins to freeze. However, it is quite common to plant daffodil and tulip bulbs successfully even into late December.



Thoroughly clean/disinfect planters and store them for the winter.



Winter is a wonderful time to browse seed and bulb catalogs. Preorder your desired bulbs and seeds.

Continued on next page ▶





Winter is a good time to prune trees and shrubs of dead or damaged branches.



Plan for the upcoming season. Which plants were successful? For vegetable crops, which ones will you rotate? (Crop rotation helps to prevent disease and insect pest build up in the soil). Winter is a great time to prepare for the year ahead. Look back on what thrived and what didn't in your garden last season. Jot down the plants you want to grow and think about experimenting with new varieties or redesigning your garden layout.



Early winter is an excellent time to apply a 2- to 4-inch layer of protective mulch to cold-sensitive plants. Mulching around the base of sensitive perennials, young trees, and tender plants provides insulation from rapid freezing and thawing.



Clean and sharpen the blades on your garden tools. Now is also a good time to have the blades on your lawnmower sharpened.



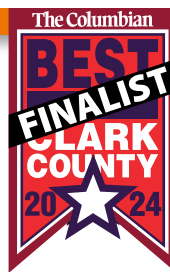
Turn your compost pile in early winter. If possible, cover it to shield it from excess rain and snow, as these can make it soggy.

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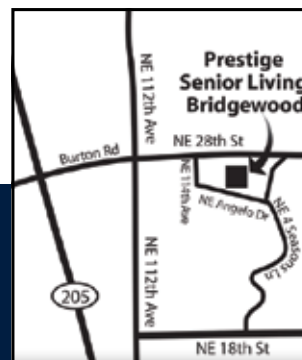
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# 2024 CHRISTMAS SHIP PARADE SCHEDULE



## 2024 COLUMBIA RIVER

DECEMBER	ASSEMBLY TIME	ASSEMBLY AREA	DESTINATION
Thursday, 5	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	Vancouver Waterfront – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
Friday, 6	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	North Portland Harbor – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
Saturday, 7	6:00PM	Camas/Washougal	Camas/Washougal – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
<b>Sunday, 8</b>		<b>NO PARADE TONIGHT</b>	
Monday, 9	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	Washington Shores/Wintler Park
Tuesday, 10	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	Vancouver Waterfront/Hayden Bay
Wednesday, 11	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	I-205 Bridge/164th
<b>Thursday, 12</b>		<b>NO PARADE TONIGHT</b>	
Friday, 13	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	Vancouver Waterfront/Hayden Bay
Saturday, 14	6:00PM	St. Helens City Docks	St. Helens/Columbia City/Woodland – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
Sunday, 15	4:30PM	JJ Collins Memorial Park	Scappoose/Multnomah Channel – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
<b>Monday, 16</b>		<b>NO PARADE TONIGHT</b>	
Tuesday, 17	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	Vancouver Waterfront/Hayden Bay
Wednesday, 18	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	I-205 Bridge/164th
Thursday, 19	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	North Portland Harbor
Friday, 20	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	Washington Shores/Wintler Park
Saturday, 21	4:30PM	RiverPlace Marina ( <b>Meet &amp; Greet - 8pm-10pm</b> )	Lake Oswego – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
Sunday, 22	5:00PM	RiverPlace Marina ( <b>Meet &amp; Greet - 2pm-4:30pm</b> )	St. Johns Bridge/Cathedral Park – <b>Combined Fleet</b>

*All parade times are approximate and subject to safety, commercial river traffic, weather and water conditions which are beyond the control of Christmas Ships, Inc.*

The Christmas Ship Parade started in 1954 with one lone sailboat from Portland Yacht Club. Bows of green with some ribbon were tied along the rails and it paraded on the river. The next year the parade started to grow. Today, The Christmas Ship Fleet averages about 55 to 60 boats between the Columbia and Willamette River fleets. Things have changed since the first lone ship. Now the displays are brightly lit and can be seen from bank to bank on each side of the river. This tradition packs the restaurants and viewing locations along the river to watch the parade.

For more information visit: [www.christmasships.org](http://www.christmasships.org)





# 2024 CHRISTMAS SHIP PARADE SCHEDULE

## 2024 WILLAMETTE RIVER

DECEMBER	ASSEMBLY TIME	ASSEMBLY AREA	DESTINATION
Thursday, 5	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	Vancouver Waterfront – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
Friday, 6	7:00PM	M. James Gleason Boat Ramp	North Portland Harbor – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
Saturday, 7	6:00PM	Camas/Washougal	Camas/Washougal – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
<b>Sunday, 8</b>		<b>NO PARADE TONIGHT</b>	
Monday, 9	7:00PM	Riverplace Marina	Fremont Bridge
Tuesday, 10	7:00PM	Riverplace Marina	Milwaukie
Wednesday, 11	7:00PM	Riverplace Marina	Fremont Bridge
<b>Thursday, 12</b>		<b>NO PARADE TONIGHT</b>	
Friday, 13	7:00PM	Riverplace Marina	Milwaukie/Oregon Yacht Club
Saturday, 14	6:00PM	St. Helens City Docks	St. Helens/Columbia City/Woodland – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
Sunday, 15	4:30PM	JJ Collins Memorial Park	Scappoose/Multnomah Channel – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
<b>Monday, 16</b>		<b>NO PARADE TONIGHT</b>	
Tuesday, 17	7:00PM	Riverplace Marina	Milwaukie
Wednesday, 18	7:00PM	Riverplace Marina	Fremont Bridge
Thursday, 19	7:00PM	Riverplace Marina	Milwaukie
Friday, 20	7:00PM	Riverplace Marina	Fremont Bridge
Saturday, 21	4:30PM	RiverPlace Marina ( <b>Meet &amp; Greet - 8pm-10pm</b> )	Lake Oswego – <b>Combined Fleet</b>
Sunday, 22	5:00PM	RiverPlace Marina ( <b>Meet &amp; Greet - 2pm-4:30pm</b> )	St. Johns Bridge/Cathedral Park – <b>Combined Fleet</b>

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For more information visit: [www.christmasships.org](http://www.christmasships.org)

# EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2024 - DECEMBER 2024

# TREE LIGHTINGS & HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

## ROTARY TREE LIGHTING

November 29, 2024. 4:30 – 7 p.m.

Esther Short Park & Vancouver Waterfront. 605 Ester St, Vancouver. Starting at the Vancouver Waterfront, Santa will sail down the Columbia. A holiday parade will then transport Santa to Esther Short Park where Santa will light the official Vancouver Community Tree. Carriage rides and family photos with Santa and Frozen characters will be available. [rotarytreelighting.org](http://rotarytreelighting.org)

## WASHOUGAL LIGHTED CHRISTMAS PARADE AND TREE LIGHTING

December 5, 2024. 6 p.m.

Main Street to Reflection Plaza. 1703 Main St, Washougal. The parade begins at 6:00 p.m. on Main Street and proceeds to Reflection Plaza. Christmas tree lighting following the parade. [cityofwashougal.us/727/Lighted-Christmas-Parade-and-Tree-Lighti](http://cityofwashougal.us/727/Lighted-Christmas-Parade-and-Tree-Lighti)

## CAMAS HOMETOWN HOLIDAYS

December 6, 2024. 5 – 8 p.m.

Downtown Camas. 216 NE 4th Ave #102, Camas. This event will include photos with Santa, crafts & activities, entertainment, free hot cocoa sponsored by Journey Church, holiday shopping, art shows, and more! The tree will be lit for the evening festivities and snow will fall! [downtowncamas.com/event/hometown-holidays](http://downtowncamas.com/event/hometown-holidays)

## RIDGEFIELD HOMETOWN CELEBRATION

December 7, 2024. 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Main Ave & Overlook Park. 113-131 S Main Ave, Ridgefield. Enjoy the hometown holiday spirit of historic Downtown Ridgefield where you will find twinkling lights, decorated businesses, gifts, food, and holiday specials on Saturday, December 7, 2024. Tree lighting ceremony at Overlook Park is at 4:30 p.m. [ridgefieldwa.us/356/December-First-Saturday](http://ridgefieldwa.us/356/December-First-Saturday)



### LA CENTER CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

December 8, 2024. 12 - 5:30 p.m.

E 4th St, La Center. Join the City of La Center for their annual Christmas tree lighting. The afternoon will be full of activities including a 5k run, musical acts, a gingerbread contest, food carts, Christmas bazaar, fireworks and more. Check out the schedule of festivities at [lacenterchristmasfestival.com/events](http://lacenterchristmasfestival.com/events)



### VANCOUVER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA HOLIDAY POPS

December 15, 2024. 3 p.m.

Skyview Concert Hall. 205 E 11th St #103, Vancouver. Vancouver's favorite holiday music extravaganza guest conducted by the internationally renowned Maestro Farkhad Khudiyev. Also, featuring Columbia Dance with Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake along with award winning guest clarinetist David Shifrin. Festive fun for young and old! [vancouversymphony.org/2024-2025-symphonic-series/](http://vancouversymphony.org/2024-2025-symphonic-series/)



### WINTER OPEN HOUSE

December 20, 2024. 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Woodland Community Library.  
770 Park St, Woodland. Celebrate winter and gather for activities and snacks. Food and drinks provided by the Friends

of Woodland Community Library. In honor of the season, the Friends of the Library are also sponsoring Celtic Muse Harpists. Library events and programs are open to the public and provided at no cost. [fvrl.librarymarket.com/winter-open-house](http://fvrl.librarymarket.com/winter-open-house)

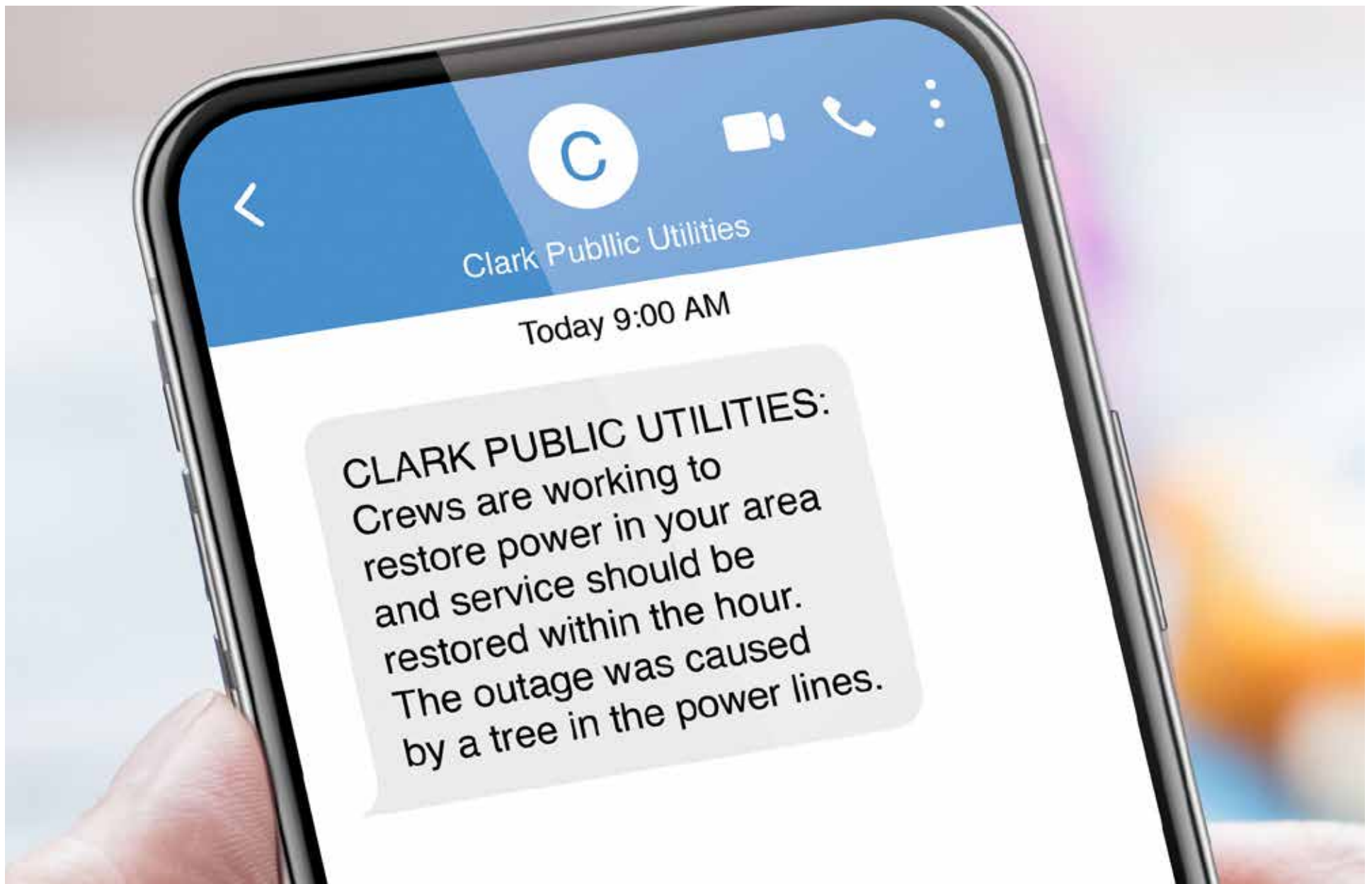
### NOON YEAR'S EVE

December 31, 2024. 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Cascade Park Community Library. 600 NE 136th Ave, Vancouver. A family friendly party with a countdown to noon! Crafts, music, dancing and more. All ages welcome. [fvrl.librarymarket.com/hold-noon-years-eve-0](http://fvrl.librarymarket.com/hold-noon-years-eve-0)

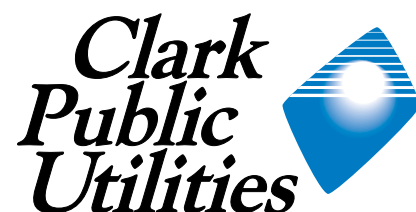






## Stay informed with text alerts

You expect reliable electric service, and that's our goal. We've designed, built and maintained one of the most reliable electric systems around, but as much as we do, some outages still happen, especially during winter storms. Stay informed about outages in your area by signing up for text alerts. Just log into MyAccount at [ClarkPublicUtilities.com](http://ClarkPublicUtilities.com).



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