

Christmas display is labor of love



Photo by Mark Zemruski

The Christmas display at the Zemruski home started out small and then gradually built up to become what they now call, "Woodinville Wonderland," a display of over 54,000 lights that are animated to five Christmas songs.

by Deborah Stone
Staff Writer

Mark and Tracy Zemruski's Christmas display has grown steadily in the past years.

The Woodinville couple has always had a passion for decorating for the holiday and they derive as much joy from the process as they do from the results. It started out small and then gradually built up to become what they now call,

"Woodinville Wonderland," a display of over 54,000 lights that are animated to five Christmas songs.

"I know people think we're crazy, but we love it," says Mark. "We have so much fun planning and creating it and then when the time comes, it's so exciting to see it all come together."

The couple begins working on the project in March, generating ideas and making lists. Then in summer, they start patching up existing display pieces and constructing new ones, which usually takes a few months.

After that, they work on the set-up stage, aiming for Thanksgiving as the initial light up time.

"This year, it was delayed because I had to take a business trip to Asia, which pushed us back quite a bit," comments Mark. "But, everything's in place now and we're up and running each evening."

A steady stream of cars has

been driving by the place and particularly those who are repeat visitors from previous years have been amazed at the magnitude of the display this season.

The Zemruskis stepped up the scope and size, as well as increased the amount of animation and the results according to Mark are, "outstanding!"

He adds, "We decided to make it bigger and better than

Woodinville Wonderland
23620 NE 183rd Street (off of
Woodinville-Duvall Rd.)
Sunday – Thursday, 5–11 p.m.
Friday – Saturday, 5–midnight
www.woodinvillewonderland.com

before to attract more attention and to get more people to come by. We're hoping that when they do, they'll also make a contribution to Special Olympics Washington."

This year is the first time that the couple has designated a charity for donations. They chose Special Olympics because they feel that the organization's work is important and worthwhile.

Mark says, "Growing up as a kid, sports offered me some life changing experiences and was a big part of my life. Along the way, I met a woman whose two children had spina bifida and they were very involved in Special Olympics. I learned more about the organization and became very impressed with it."

When the organization heard of Mark's idea to secure donations via his holiday display, it was thrilled and delighted to be the recipient.

As people drive up to the Zemruskis' street, they will find a flyer describing the display, as well as a donation box in which to leave their contributions to Special Olympics.

Folks can read about all the work that went into making the display and be wowed at some of the statistics, such as the amount of feet of extension cords, 3,450; the number channels of light animation, 240; and the length of the wire used, 14,500 feet.

They will learn that the whole shebang is powered by 315 amp circuits and a new Santa Power 50 amp sub panel and that the lights and music are all run by a laptop computer. Hundreds of hours went into this project, but an exact figure is unknown as the Zemruskis lost count months ago.

"It's just too hard to keep track of how much time we spent," says Mark, "and that's probably a good thing because if we knew the truth, we'd really have to admit that we are nuts!"

He adds, "Creating this display is our passion and when you get down to basics, Christmas is all about giving and sharing. This allows us to share with everyone our way of celebrating the holiday."



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