

# LUMINARIA NIGHT

Luminaria Night is the most magical night of the year for Four Seasons Greenhouse and Nursery Inc. in Dolores, Colorado. Owner Gail Vanik discusses how the event has become an annual tradition.

By Teresa McPherson

## CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE EVENT?

Our Luminaria Night is our way of saying “thank you” to our community. This is a free event that begins at 5 p.m. with over 1,000 luminarias lit throughout the greenhouses, nursery and along the pathways of the garden center property.

Santa and Mrs. Claus make their appearance and stay through the evening listening to the Christmas wish lists of young and old alike. Homemade cookies, punch and piping hot coffee are offered.

Starting with a local vocal group, each half hour to hour a different performing group takes center stage to share their special brand of holiday music. Groups include local choral groups, the local high school choir and bands, and community bands, along with church choirs that remind us of the reason for the season.

In the true fashion of an open house, visitors come and go throughout the evening. It's a fun, festive family evening spent sharing the spirit of the season, Four Seasons style, with our friends and neighbors. We always joke that we never have to have a Christmas party of our own because we usually end up seeing everyone on Luminaria Night!

## HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING LUMINARIA NIGHT?

Since 1992. When we bought the garden center in 1998, we simply carried on and in subsequent years have expanded the event.



## HOW DO YOU PUBLICIZE THE EVENT?

We actually do very little publicity. It's listed on our seasonal direct mail piece and in our social media and emails, but other than that, we don't do much. It's become a holiday staple in our community so we don't need to publicize it much. On a good evening, if the weather cooperates, we'll draw between 1,000 and 1,500 guests already. Since our parking lot only has 110 spaces, there really isn't room for more.



## LET'S TALK LOGISTICS.

Luminaria bags are prepped and filled in advance then stored in an empty greenhouse. Performers repeat year after year. As a matter of fact, my biggest problem is turning people away that want to perform but we don't have enough time slots available. I rarely have a slot that I'm looking to fill. Refreshments are handled in house too and I bake between 75 and 100 dozen cookies for the evening. Punch and coffee are also offered. Santa and Mrs. Claus always make their appearance for us as well. After so many years, the event runs like a well-oiled machine.

