

Surrey Santa Parade of Lights rolls again on Dec. 1

Popular parade kicks off at 5 p.m.

Malin Jordan
Cloverdale Reporter

Marco Iannuzzi, former star wide receiver for the B.C. Lions, will be the parade marshal for the 14th annual Surrey Santa Parade of Lights.

"We're excited to have Marco as our parade marshal," said Paul Oraziotti, the event organizer. "The parade is not yet known as a major city parade, but it's growing. It's still in its infancy, so having Marco as our parade marshal increases our exposure even more."

Boyd Autobody & Glass, this year's presenting sponsor, was instrumental in landing Iannuzzi as marshal, added Oraziotti.

Oraziotti, also the executive director for

the Cloverdale Business Improvement Association, said he expects thousands of folks to line the streets of Cloverdale's downtown core Dec. 1.

"Last year we had about 15,000 people come out to watch the parade and I think this year will be similar."

This year the parade will grow in length. Oraziotti said the City of Surrey is allowing him to add 500 metres to the parade route and to set up bleachers to accommodate more spectators, improving safety.

The Santa parade is not your typical parade. Parade-goers bring donations to help a variety of different charities that provide a little bit of Christmas joy to the



BLACK PRESS FILE PHOTO

The 13th-annual Surrey Santa Parade of Lights rolled through downtown Cloverdale in this photo from 2018. This year's parade takes place Dec. 1, beginning at 5 p.m.

less fortunate.

Oraziotti is encouraging spectators to bring unwrapped toys, non-perishable food items, and money to

donate at the 'Charity Zone' located in Hawthorne Square on 176 Street. The Charity Zone will have a bunch of dif-

ferent booths: many will be filled with volunteers from local charities, one will have hot chocolate, and one will house Telus. The

Telus booth will have a hockey shootout where visitors have a chance to win prizes.

The parade supports the Cloverdale Com-

munity Kitchen, the Surrey Christmas Bureau, and the Surrey Food Bank, Oraziotti said.

Because of the addition of 500 metres, the Surrey Santa Parade will follow a slightly different route this year. Beginning at the Cloverdale Fairgrounds at 5 p.m., it will move along 60th Ave. toward Elements Casino. The route then turns south, heading down 177B Street, until it hits 57th Ave., at which point the parade heads west on 57th Ave.

When the holiday light parade hits 176th Street, it turns north for one block until 58th Ave, at which point it turns again on 58th Ave. The parade then runs east until 176A Street, turning north, before ending back at the fairgrounds.

According to Ora-

ziotti, there will be a variety of vehicles decked out with lights and there will be a variety of marching groups, including a marching drum unit, service clubs, and dance groups.

"There will also be hot rods, Model A Fords, decorated cement trucks, and a giant 120 tonne crane," Oraziotti added. "We will also potentially have a float from City Council, but nothing's been confirmed yet."

As of Nov. 15, Oraziotti said he had about 60 confirmed parade entries. He caps the number at 90, noting he will have no problem reaching that number.

This year will be the second year in a row Oraziotti will have drones flying over the parade.

"We've been flying drones for all the

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events we organize," he said. "It started last year and the police are very interested in it too because of the higher desire for safety these days. My goal is to give people a sense of the size of the parade from a lot of different perspectives."

Oraziotti said even though the parade still has some hurdles to climb, people are starting to take notice of it.

"It's now become a signature event and the city is recognizing that. We believe the event is only going to grow. It's a non-commercial event, so we still struggle to cover costs and we rely on sponsors."

He said it's an important event for the locals.

"I think it's something that does a great deal of good for Surrey."

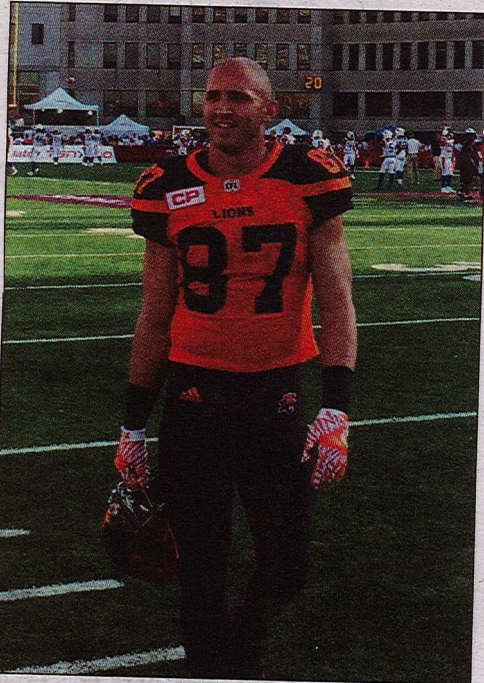


PHOTO: TECHTALK10 VIA WIKIPEDIA

Marco Iannuzzi of the B.C. Lions is seen at a game

For a route map, and more information, visit surreysantaparade.com.

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