

# Holiday lights display illuminates home in Glen Carbon's Fairfield subdivision

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**GLEN CARBON** – The area’s hottest holiday attraction is not visiting Santa Claus at the nearest mall, nor traveling out to Belleville to gaze upon the **National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows**. Rather, it is at a home nestled within the **Fairfield** subdivision in **Glen Carbon**.

The home, located at **401 Chadwyck Dr.**, is illuminated with nearly 70,000 incandescent holiday lights, glowing arches along with hundreds of props. The amount of detail scattered across the yard’s entire landscape something you will truly have to see to believe.

**Chris Ipanis**, the homeowner behind the beloved display, began decorating his home about ten years ago after a holiday prop he remembers placing upon his childhood home with his father, entered production once again.

“It all started with one item,” he said. “The Santa Claus and reindeer display that is up on the roof is something I remember putting up with my dad. The company that made it all of a sudden started producing the items again and I bought one. From there, it kept getting bigger and bigger.”

“Big” seems to be an understatement for the immaculate display, which glows brightly beginning the day after Thanksgiving until Christmas Day. The display grown in popularity each year, especially with the added exposure from Facebook.

“It’s fun to see how ‘viral’ the house can go each and every year,” Ipanis said.

Throughout the years, Ipanis felt constantly challenged to make the display better and more interactive for its visitors.

Using the program **Light-O-Rama**, he programmed the lights, which are connected to 160 different channels within the system, to blink in synchronization with six holiday tunes. The channels can be programmed to synchronize within a quarter of a second, making the staccatos of some of the most well-regarded Christmas songs blink along with the display. Listeners can tune their radios to **90.5 FM** to listen along to the show.

“It brings the whole thing to life,” he said. “You can see what’s changing, turning off, changing colors; each individual channel is unique.”

The price of operating such an elaborate display seems to be on the mind of several of the house’s visitors.

“I do get a lot of questions about the power bill,” he said. “It normally runs about \$1,100 to \$1,300 additionally the near 45 days it is lit.”

The display surely is something one must see to believe, and Ipanis invites all to come out and be marveled.

Instead of offering up a money jar for donations to supplement his power bill, upon his porch lies a Toys 4 Tots donation box where people can drop off unwrapped presents that will go to those less fortunate in the community.

“The cost is something that I manage and I try to think how I can use everything out there to try to give back to some that might not have the same opportunities for the holiday season,” he said.

All and all, Ipanis holiday lights display is a great local opportunity to for those to come out and celebrate the holiday right in their own back yards.

The lights go on each and every day at 5:30 p.m. and will be illuminated until Christmas Day.