Elaborately decorated home in Norfolk benefits CHKD

Shawn Padgett's holiday display has gotten so big that two local businesses now sponsor it

By Lia Russell
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It¢s no secret that Shawn Padgett loves Christmas.

Just drive by his Suburban Acres home, decorated with thousands of lights and dozens of outdoor displays.

Unlike others who dress their homes to the nines for the holidays, though, Padgett takes it a few steps further.

Five years ago, Padgett purchased equipment to make his lights blink to the beat of his favorite holiday music, accessed on 101.7 FM, which transmits within a block of his home.

And the display has gotten so big that two local businesses now sponsor it: No Frill Bar and Grill and Dog-n-Burger Grille in Ghent, owned by Padgett¢s friends Jerry Meltsner and Jon Kliner.

They¢ve provided $500 for each of the past three years to help run and expand the display, which takes seven days to set up.

%We love watching parents and grandparents bring their kids and grandkids to see our light display,+ Padgett, 43, said.

The custom started when Padgett was a boy, living in the same home where he and his wife, Mary, now raise two children of their own. His father %was big into decorating,+ Padgett said.

Today, a collection box out front accepts donations for The Children¢s Hospital of the King¢s Daughters. Padgett has raised more than $24,000 for the hospital since 2006.

%Not only is the display amazing to see, but Shawn is encouraging adults and children to donate to a worthy cause,+said Chrissie Diorides, who grew up a few blocks away from the Padgetts. %It really encompasses the spirit of the season.+

From 5 to 11 p.m. any given night, dozens of cars roll by and park in front of 314 Suburban Pkwy. Stop long enough and you¢ll see Santa wave through a window over the garage.

%Whenever we¢re in the car, my children ask if we can drive by 'Mr. Shawn¢s house,+neighbor Maria Rea said. %It¢s become a Christmas tradition.+

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