



KEIZERTIMES/Craig Murphy
The Naegeli house at McLeod Lane and Rock Ledge Drive is decked out for Christmas.

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“When he had a child, his wife didn’t want him to do it anymore,” Barbara said. “I understood. I couldn’t watch anymore.”

Though not as much gets put up, that doesn’t mean purchases aren’t made. After all, lights wear or burn out, new technology is more energy efficient and so on.

“He’s on timeout from Lowe’s,” Barbara said, smiling at Harlan. “He’s not allowed to go there by himself anymore.”

Harlan acknowledges having more items than space.

“You get to a certain point where you’ve put enough up and pack the rest of it away,” he said.

Barbara admitted not putting every decoration up is hard.

“If we could, we would put things up everywhere,” she said. “We can’t fit it all out there. We’ll do this item this

year, then this thing will go up next year. Everything has meaning to me.”

It’s not unusual for people to get in the Christmas mood when seeing the Naegeli home. Heck, it even happens to Barbara.

“The outside is wonderful,” she said. “I love driving home at night and seeing the lights. It makes me happy. I’ll watch dads and moms walk their kids by the house. They stop and take pictures. I think it’s lovely.”

Barbara calls the manger scene her favorite part of the outdoor decorations, while Harlan enjoys everything.

The two have had to compromise over the years. For example, fishing and car ornaments are no longer on the tree, a compromise Harlan had to make. On the other hand, Barbara quit putting up streamers about 15 years ago.

Lest you be worried the family tradition will end with Harlan and Barbara, both of their sons still live in town and carry on the decorating

tradition. The next generation has gotten into the act as well, both for Christmas and Halloween decorating. Grandchildren, ranging from 9 year old Sara to 3 year old Layne, help grandpa with the pirate ship at Halloween. Layne got to also help out with the Christmas decorations this year.

“They all help build the ship,” Barbara said. “Layne hauls the big plastic Mary out for the manger scene and puts out every candy cane. That’s why it is so much fun. I’ll watch from the window. Plus they’ll help me do the tree inside.”

Harlan said putting up the Christmas decorations can take two or three days, depending on the weather. Things were late in getting up this year due to all of the recent rain. But once things are in place and the compliments start rolling in, that warms Harlan’s heart.

“That makes all the effort worth it,” he said.

Barbara said the utility bill jumps about \$125 in December due to the lights. They got help with the bill once.

“One year we won \$50 from the Keizer Chamber for having the best looking house,” she said. “We didn’t even know there was a contest.”

Like Harlan, Barbara loves the reaction from others.

“Our neighbors seem to really like it,” she said. “Or they think we’re crazy. It could be that, too.”

Christmas celebrated at Keizer Heritage Center on Dec. 17

Photos by Craig Murphy/KEIZERTIMES



A: Amy Lietz helps Jorja Sell, 8, work on a craft project in the library.

B and C: Brothers Drew (left) and Nathan (right) Haynes, 8 and 6, work on craft projects while waiting for Santa Claus to arrive.

D: Evan and Kathleen Charles brought their 14-month-old son Aiden to Keizer Heritage Center.

E: This singing Christmas tree entertained people of all ages.

F: Aayden Greve, 3, bartered with Santa Claus in hopes of getting a candy cane that was not broken. Aayden was ultimately successful in his mission.



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