

NICKLE, Bruce & Marjorie



Bruce and Marjorie Nickle.

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## Mr. and Mrs. Santa need a hand

By HENRY BURY  
Staff Reporter

Belleville's Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus need a gift themselves to help make Christmas a lot brighter for youngsters and adults this year.

That gift is financial support to help offset the rising costs associated with the Marsh Drive couple's popular outdoor Christmas display and their distribution of small gifts and candy to more than 1,500 children who visit them Christmas Eve.

Bruce and Marjorie Nickle have written letters to city businesses asking for financial contributions to help "keep this (outdoor display) a Belleville tradition."

"We're just trying to make Christmas better for children and adults...we don't mind pay-

ing for the expenses but it's getting to a point where it's getting too expensive," Bruce Nickle said Sunday.

The Nickles estimate it costs upwards of \$3,000 to run their Christmas display and purchase gifts and candy for children.

"We are experiencing difficulty in financing the overall operation due to the rising economy," they said in the letter. "Yearly replacement costs of electrical motors, light bulbs and extension cords; additional hydro costs and the costs of providing gifts and candy for the children have all resulted in increasing the financial burden with respect to our display."

The Nickles made a similar appeal last year (for the first time) and they were pleased with the response.

"Whatever money comes in

will be used for the Christmas display and improving it. We enjoy doing it as much as the kids enjoy coming here," he said.

Added Marjorie, "We don't want people to think they have to donate when they come here to view the display. But lots of businesses or corporations can give \$25 or \$50 and not feel it too much. It will certainly be a load off our shoulders."

The Nickles Christmas display will go up Nov. 23, with the help of local letter carriers.

The display has upwards of 75 sets of lights and giant candles.

The Nickles started their Christmas lawn display in 1981, when they "accepted the challenge" from the Don Foster family of Emily Street to continue the tradition of honoring the Fosters' son, Billie, who was killed on Christmas Eve in 1958.

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