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## America's Dazzling Christmas & Holiday Lights



The Petersons - Minneola, FL

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Our Interview With Jay Peterson

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### To All Artists of Exterior Illumination

By Justin McKinley

'Tis the season again for exterior illumination, w hen electric elves everyw here allow our little third rock from the sun to sparkle like orbital bling, w hen children by the masses look skyw ard in Spielbergian awe for you-know-w ho, and w hen quip-smacking chipmunks party in the yards of those w ho pick up the decorating tab. Ah... Who doesn't love this time of year?

So to spread the cheer, we reached out to homeowners across America and asked them to share their Christmas lights and holiday handiwork, from Griswoldian feats in the frosted Rockies to supernovas in the cushy climes of Florida. All of these home-glowers have spent weeks prepping and programming their displays, some even producing Vegas-style light shows, and many of their labors of love have even kindled extra sparks for raising donations for charities, in addition to lifting neighborly spirits. And isn't it all worth it?

Grab the kids, the fam-- even the crankiest of cranky bah-humbugs -- for a drive through our gallery of LED magic and electric hum-pum-pum-pum. And as you hustle through the ringtone-rumble of passersby this holiday season, may you also not forget to share the simplest form of exterior illumination, that being your smile.

On to a brighter 2012... Glow to the world.

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You know the ol' saying "do what you love and love what you do"? Jay Peterson turned his passion for lights and music, which began when he turned his bedroom "into a mini nightclub" with lights as a teenager, and started his own company that specializes in computerized light shows and holiday lights. Now his neighborhood can enjoy his dazzling handiwork for both Christmas and Halloween.

**First, the two questions everyone asks: Approximately how many lights are in your display? And how long does it take you to put them up?**

Actually I stopped counting. My display two years ago had approximately 45,000 lights.

**How many years having you been putting up your display? How did it become a tradition?**

I have been doing computerized lights shows on my house since 2008. I am a former DJ and loved synchronizing the lights to music at various clubs. I also worked with car audio and made the lights flash to the beat of the music. I guess I have always been fascinated with the combination of lights and music. What I do know is incredible with endless possibilities.

**What's your favorite part of your display or what are you most proud of?**

I am proud of my entire display, but if I had to pick one thing I would say it's my 20 foot mega tree (all LED lights). It really catches everyone's eyes.

**If you were to dedicate your display to anyone or thank anyone, who would it be?**

Definitely both my parents, who have been extremely supportive to my shows and my new business, Jayslights LLC.

**Do you support any particular charity with your display?**

I collect toys for an Orlando radio station, XL 106.7FM. The name of the organization is The Baby DJ Fund. The toys are separated into different rooms inside their office building. Parents that can't afford to buy toys for their children are allowed to pick out toys for them.

**And just for fun... What's your favorite holiday movie and song?**

Without a doubt, "Christmas Vacation"! Although I did enjoy "Deck the Halls". My favorite holiday song is "Sarajevo" by Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

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