

The most festive award went to Philip McComiskey's lighted trees and house at 514 Essex Ave.

Amy Sweeney photos

• Light displays

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doing it."

She said her Christmas displays each year are a public way of wishing her friends and the community a "Merry Christmas."

Philip McComiskey's lighted trees at 514 Essex Ave. won the festive award.

Each of the several trees is decorated with lights of a certain color. There are green, red, yellow, blue, white and "a couple of more green" lit trees on their lawn. They also have two ceramic reindeer with red noses which seem to glow when the spotlights are put on them.

Judy Lane said she and McComiskey decorate their lawn each year "just because I like it and he enjoys doing it."

The creche at Lester Mountain

Sr.'s home at 2A Pigeon Hill Ct., Rockport, won in the religious category.

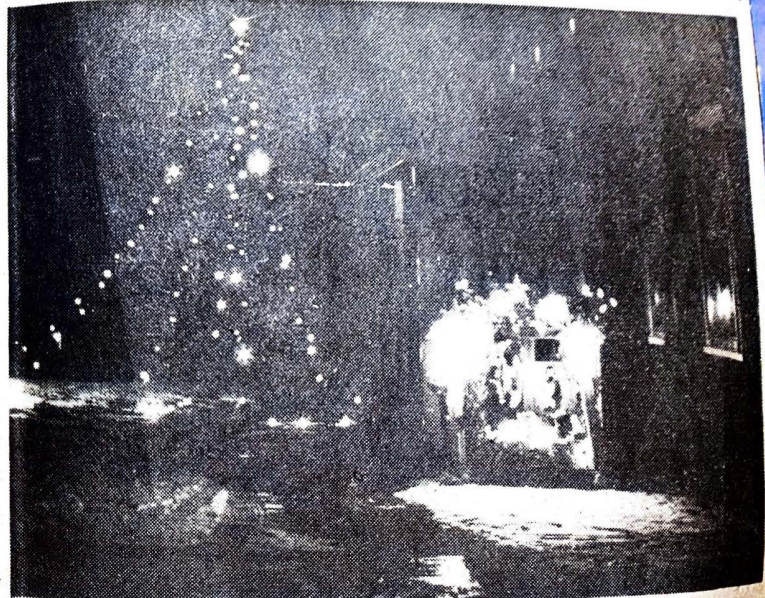
The wooden creche contains two-foot-tall figurines of Mary and Joseph looking down at the infant Jesus in the manger. In front of the creche are two decorative lamps which light up the interior.

Fitz Lufkin, Ruth Pino, John Kent, Sharon Surma, Diane Polley, Susan Scola and Militello all worked to organize and judge each of the entrants.

"We hope it will become a yearly thing," said Militello, because the lights show a spirit of Christmas and of community.

The agency also awarded four honorable mentions to:

- The Congregational Church at 495 Essex Ave. for a live Nativity — including children and animals.



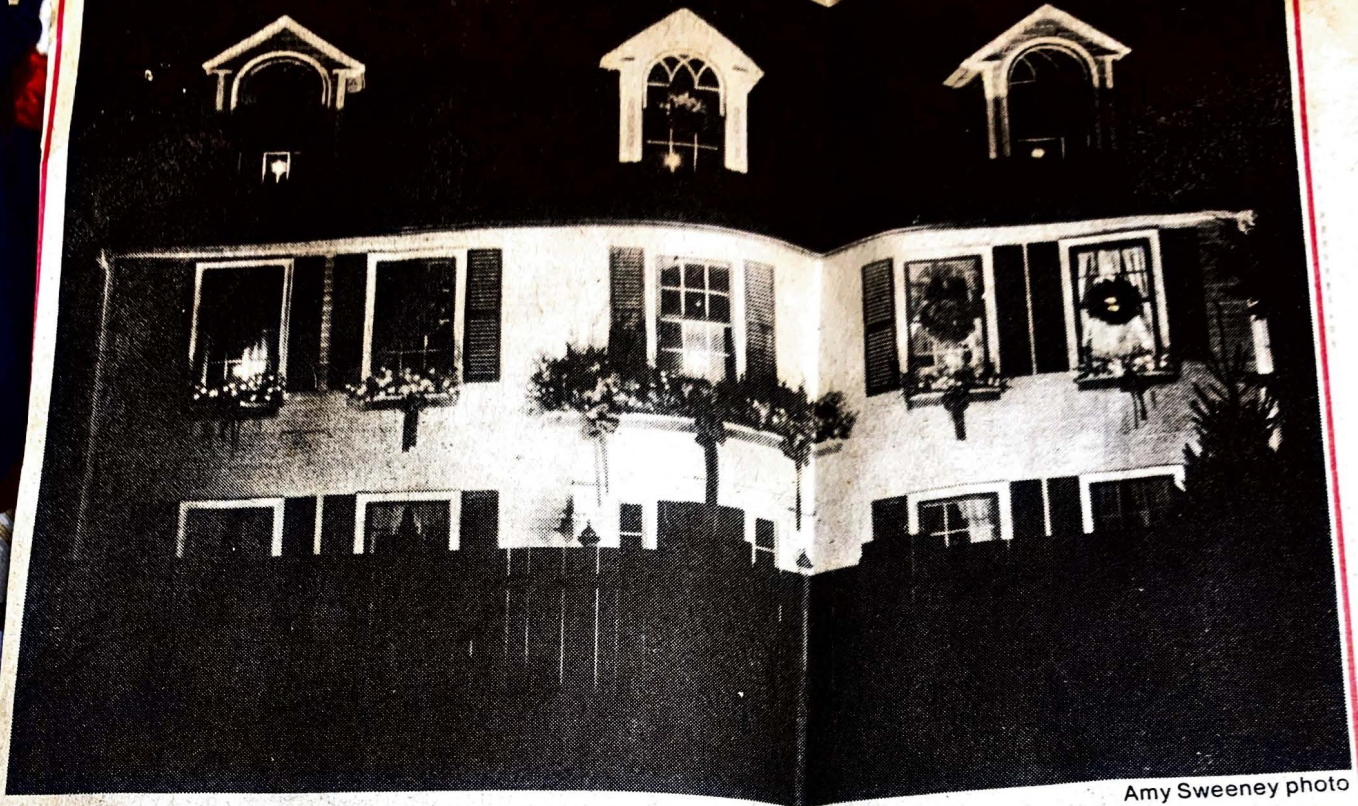
The religious award was given for the creche of Lester Mountain Sr.'s home at 2A Pigeon Hill Court.

- Essex for a boat filled with lit trees floating in the middle of the Alewife Brook.

- A "Merry Christmas" sign in

the Marsh.

- The residents of High Peoples Road for the "Brightest Neighborhood."



Amy Sweeney photo

This display of Christmas lights at the Kart home on Western Avenue won a prize in the

First Lighting Contest held by Lufkin & Brown Inc., Realtors. More photos, page A7.

A light touch for Christmas

By **KEN FISH**
Times staff

Decorating the outside of a home at Christmas all started with the tradition of lighting a candle in the window.

Now, Cape Ann homes are lit up by spotlights on Christmas wreaths peppered with holly berries. Lawns are decorated with ceramic statues of Santa's reindeer. And colorful lights festoon many homes, although some homeowners are trying for more unusual displays.

All those lights delight the staff of a Gloucester real estate firm.

Lufkin & Brown Inc., Realtors, awarded prizes this week to those on Cape Ann who made the best lighting displays.

"I remember when I was a kid," said Anthony Militello, "we

used to go for rides at night just to look at the Christmas lights."

He said the number of lighted decorations in Gloucester has declined, "And I've missed them."

Militello, who works at the agency, said that for the past few years light displays have become scarce, so some people who worked in the agency decided it was time they did something about it. That something became Lufkin & Brown's First Lighting Contest.

The agency offered prizes in three categories: traditional, festive and religious. The winner of each category will receive a gift certificate entitling them to a free dinner at the restaurant of their choice.

Midge Kart's display on 729 Western Ave., Magnolia — a combination of red velvet ribbon, Christmas lights and spot-

lights — won in the most-traditional category.

The front of Midge and Robert Kart's Georgian-style home, known in the neighborhood as the "Christmas Home," is tricked out with four six-foot long red velvet ribbons fashioned into bows that hang from the second story and reach to the windows of the first floor.

Underneath each window sits a window box filled with pine boughs and other greenery, interlaced with small white lights shining like distant stars seen through the branches of trees.

Spotlights on the ground illuminate the bows so they can be easily seen from the road.

"It's not something we feel pressured to do every year," Midge Kart said, "We just enjoy

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