## Christmas Light Tour

Every year, towards the middle of December, Strode Funeral Home offers a tour of the best Christmas Light displays of Stillwater to the citizens in the community. Our goal with the Tour was to enable Stillwater's aging residents the opportunity to see the Christmas lights, be able to interact socially with new people, and often relive their Christmases past.

In the beginning, the tours were offered to individuals in local nursing homes and assisted living centers as an opportunity to provide a service to people in our area beyond funerals. Over the next 15 years, word spread about our tours and the general public expressed a desire to participate as well. The program has now evolved to include anyone who wishes to take part.

While touring Stillwater in our three limos, we primarily focus on two areas to view due to the fact they are well lit and seem to have the best displays. The tours generally take approximately two hours from pick-up to drop-off.

We encourage as many different staff members as possible to drive our limos through the routes each night. This enables them the opportunity to interact with the public in a positive way. Each year our drivers will receive small gifts of fruit, cookies, ect, from the groups, but the true gift is being able to see the joy in the participants as they see the lights and often speak openly of the years gone by.

This program began as a way for our funeral home staff to become known beyond the confines of our regular services. It has progressed into something so much more than that. Our staff finds that partaking in this special program is very enjoyable and rewarding. It is a true delight to share these holiday moments with the often "forgotten" residents of Stillwater, and spread a little holiday cheer of our own from a business that is most familiar with grief and sadness.