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Staff photo by Dave Bentz

The lights of Christmas indicate that the holiday season is here, as shown in this photo taken looking west on Lincoln's O Street.

Sending Christmas greetings still a popular holiday custom

By Kathleen Green

Santa skiing, reindeers wearing braces and Snoopy decorating his dog house are some of the popular images that have appeared on Christmas cards during recent years.

Despite increased postage rates and the current recession, the popularity of

the Christmas card custom is expected to continue, two Lincoln greeting card dealers said.

"People are still buying some Christmas cards but not quite as many," said Shirley Steiner, manager of Evenson's Hallmark Cards & Gifts, 1111 O St. "It's certainly not a dying tradition."

Mary Sandin, manager of Avant Card, 115 N. 14th St., said, "We're living in a time when money is tight and sending Christmas greetings is the most economical way to express holiday cheer."

This holiday season, cards designed for relatives are making up the bulk of sales, Steiner said.

Avant Cards specializes in selling a more unique and outrageous type of cards.

"We have a wide variety of cards," Sandin said. "Different graphics out of the norm, such as punk or cynical cards, are very popular."

Despite Sandin's and Steiner's reports of continued sales, Ken Miller, director of mail processing at the U.S. Post Office in Lincoln, said the post office reported a 1.9 percent decrease in first class mail between 1980 and 1981.

"More people are unemployed, and they are not sending the same amount of Christmas cards," Miller said.

Both card shop owners said that postage rate increases have not affected their businesses.

"People still are willing to spend money for the Christmas season. They may not be sending as many cards, but they are making sure that they send some," Steiner said.

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