

Holiday Happenings

Creating Holiday Traditions That Bring The Family Together

(NAPSA)—Traditions can be a fun way to celebrate holidays with family and friends. They can help add a feeling of love and togetherness to any seasonal gathering.

Fortunately, it is easy to start a treasured tradition that is enjoyed for years to come. These are some ideas for creating your own yearly holiday happenings:

- Try taking the whole family to the lot to help choose a great tree. Because it is a tree to be enjoyed by all, everyone should take part in the tree selection. Remember to bring along a camera or video recorder to capture the fun moments on film.

- Start an ornament exchange by giving each family member a special ornament each year. Remember to label each ornament with the year it was given. Try exchanging them while decorating the tree. Brew some hot cider or chocolate and take the time to enjoy each other's company while swapping holiday keepsakes.

- Take holiday portraits. Professional portrait studios, such as The Picture People, can help create lifetime memories with family portraits. The Picture People also has fun props (like oversized snowmen and gingerbread men and a sleigh you can sit in), colorful backdrops and photographers who are experts at getting smiles on young faces.

- Give in to the gift-opening urge by allowing each family member to open one present on Christmas Eve. This can help bring everyone together for a few special relaxing moments before the excitement of Christmas morning.

- Bring holiday cheer to the neighborhood with a round of joyful caroling. The voices may not be ready for Broadway, but the neighbors will probably still appreciate the effort.



Portrait courtesy of The Picture People



Make holiday portraits and personalized cards a treasured tradition.

- For tasty holiday fun, bring hungry kids (and adults) into the kitchen to construct gingerbread houses. Key ingredients include empty milk boxes, graham crackers, icing, an assortment of candies and, of course, creativity.

- Put on a holiday music CD and gather loved ones together to create homemade tree ornaments and decorations, like popcorn, paper or dried cranberry chains.

- Take a holiday light tour to check out neighborhood decorations. Pile your family into the car at night and drive around town looking for homes with the best lights and displays, or walk around the block and check out displays closer to home.

Remember, traditions do not have to be limited to families. They can be created with friends, roommates, couples, classmates or even pets.

The best traditions never lose their fun and excitement.

For more information on making holiday portraits a tradition, visit www.picturepeople.com or call 1-800-341-HOUR.