

## Have You Heard?

By Doris Thomas Lancaster Extension Home Economist

BY DORIS W. THOMAS **Extension Agent Family Living** 

## Help Children Enjoy Giving As Well As Receiving During Holidays

Christmas shopping with children can be a real chore... the stores are busy, everyone is rushing and the shelves are packed with things to choose from.

Children love to give gifts though and if you help them they can learn the value of money and good spending habits.

This Christmas why not encourage your children to make something for someone they love? Homemade gifts can be more special than a store-bought item for the giver as well as the receiver.

If you decide to let children go shopping and pick out presents, choose a time of the day when the stores will be somewhat less crowded. During the dinner hour or early in the morning are good choices. Don't try to do your own shopping when you have children along. There are too many things for them to look at and decide upon as it is, and it will turn into a frustrating trip if you're both shopping at once. Feed the children before you go out and limit the trip with three or four possible gifts. This will give the children some direction and prevent them from stopping to look at every

nem on display. Also by making some suggestions, you are influencing the price and style but the child actually chooses the gift. Children really feel a sense of accomplishment when they have actually picked

> **Decorate Your** Tree Safely

out the presents they give.

The Christmas tree is one of the most beautiful of all holiday decorations. But the tree can also be dangerous.

If you have an artificial tree, make sure it's fire resistant. When purchasing a natural tree, make sure it's fresh. A fresh tree should have a deep green color and strong pine scent. Needles should bend without breaking and be firmly attached to the twigs. If many necdles fall off when the tree is shaken or bumped lightly on the ground, the tree may be too dry.

A tree purchased too early will dry out and become a fire hazard. Even if you buy a tree at the last minute, it may have been cut very early and have dried out. Don't be misled by a nicely-shaped tree. The best looking tree may not be the safest."

Keep the tree outside in a cool area until you are ready to bring it

inside. Cut about 2 inches off the trunk before you put it in a stand. This new cut will draw in water more easily than the original cut, which has probably hardened and dried up. Keep the stand filled with water so the tree will not dry out as fast. Place the tree away from heat registers, radiators and fireplaces that will dry out the tree much faster.

Use lights and cords on your tree that carry UL approval. Use

only indirect tighting on metal trees. Purchase a new string of lights instead of trying to get by one more year with the old, worn out lights. Before putting any lights on the tree, check strings for loose or broken sockets and cords with bare wires showing.

Never use candles on or near the tree. Avoid small items that might look like food or candy to children who might try to eat

## Ponderosa To Serve **America's Cut**

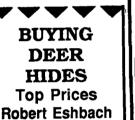
The Ponderosa Steakhouse chain has begun a national roll-out of America's Cut<sup>TM</sup>. According to its corporate headquarters, Ponderosa's franchise units across the nation have been authorized to begin serving the premium boneless pork cut. Corporate Ponderosas will begin rolling out America's Cut in the near future. Ponderosa, which has 700 units, is the first chain to menu America's Cut nationwide.

"This is a major breakthrough for pork in the foodservice area,'

said Larry Cizek, NPPC Director of Foodservice. "Introducing America's Cut in a steakhouse like this shows that leaders in the foodservice industry are realizing the value of today's pork," he said.



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