

Build Family Traditions

HONESDALE (Wayne Co.) — Holidays, especially Christmas, mean family traditions. Even though the holiday traditions in your family may not resemble a Norman Rockwell painting, traditions serve an important purpose in every family. As one college student said it, "A tradition is something that strengthens ties in the family. All family members look forward to it, all participate, and all enjoy doing it. Everyone misses it if something comes up and it is not done."

Traditions are not limited to holidays. A family tradition can be anything that occurs with some regularity and holds special meaning for a family. It can be as simple as reading bedtime stories or as elaborate as an annual trip across country to grandma's house. The existence of family traditions can help make a family feel special and unique. Because the meanings of these occasions and activities are usually understood and enjoyed by the family alone, they can create feelings of closeness and shared meanings. Traditions provide stability and continuity in a changing world.

Traditions should be enjoyable and bring family members

together. Sometimes, however, a tradition outlives its usefulness or evokes resentment, boredom, discomfort or indifference. Children may outgrow long family camping trips or Sunday afternoons at certain relatives' homes. If such is the case, it may be time to retire the tradition. New traditions can be developed by your family that fit with your lifestyle and values. Here are some possibilities for new traditions in your family.

- Having a bedtime routine
- Eating waffles every Sunday or leftovers every Wednesday
- Using a special chair or plate on birthdays or other important occasions
- Making your own birthday or Christmas cards
- Dying Easter eggs on Good Friday night
- Getting each child an ornament at Christmas
- Pretending to avoid Mom's goodnight kiss
- Children taking turns staying up late with parents
- Practically anything!

Traditions are important in every kind of family. One woman, widowed with a two-year-old daughter, realized the importance of traditions in her small family.

"Even with just my daughter and me, we established rituals in our lifestyle. We loved them and looked forward to living them together."

Traditions are especially important when a family is experiencing changes and traditions. Changes

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in jobs, moving to a new place, changes in marital status, or the birth of a new baby all disrupt family routines. Because of the sense of stability that traditions give, it is important to maintain

some of them when we move into new family situations. Families adjust more easily to the stress of a new situation when they continue observing traditions as soon as possible.



Christmas is an opportunity for the Rohrer family to take a break from business and farming responsibilities and enjoy family and friends.

Rohrer Family

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son shoot a buck on the first day of hunting season. Roger has a trophy room in the basement complete with a full-bear, fox, pheasant, and numerous other mounts.

As a banker, Roger said that he believes it is important for families to keep withdrawals for recreation at a modest level.

"The best time for farm families to make a substantial commitment to farming is in their 20s and 30s, not older. That is when their energy is higher and withdrawals can be less. When the kids get older, it takes more money for extras."

On the other end of the spectrum are families who need some diversion to get a break from farming and who don't take it. "Both extremes limit the success of the operation," he said.

When setting up a budget, Roger counsels the family to discipline farm withdrawals or their debt service will be greatly affected.

"I really appreciate the agricultural strengths in south central Pennsylvania," he said. "I'm confident this area will be able to compete long term because of the high calibre of people."

"Economically Lancaster County is a great place to live," Roger said. "It's the place to take advantage of all the opportunities to make your dreams come true."

He explained that Lancaster County is known to be prosperous in the tourist, farm, and commercial areas and from these three areas the Rohrers have also prospered.

Tourists are what have made Kandy's quilt business, the ag lending relates to the commercial area, and farming to their tobacco business.

"It is a benefit that I was born and raised in the county and have a career. I can't say enough about the strength of agriculture and I'm proud to be associated with it," he said.

Roger said, "Although I did not start out with any particular goal in mind as I was exposed to different opportunities, a dream evolved. It became my dream to own a farm, live on it with my family, and have an ag lending career." That dream is now a reality and one with which Roger is still a bit awed.

He said, "Christmas is a celebration of Christ's birth and also a time to enjoy family and friends. The season makes me realize how grateful I am to have the opportunity to live on this farm with my family and do the things I love."

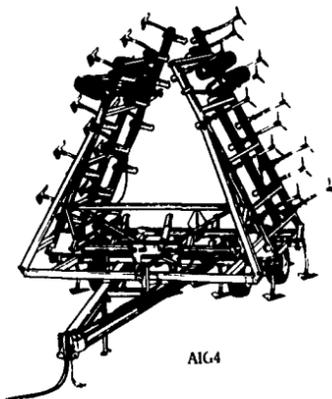
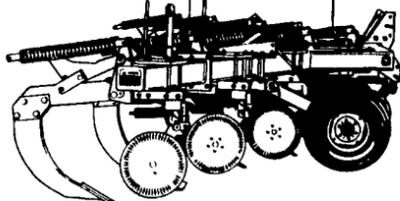
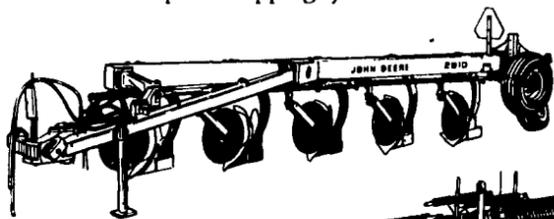


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