

## Time To Plan For Enjoyable Season

# Seven Weeks Until Christmas

LOU ANN GOOD

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LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — If you have an image of what the ideal family and the perfect Christmas should be, then it's time to "think clearly about the rush of it all," Phyllis Pellman Good said at Berks County Extension's annual holiday program.

According to Good, seven weeks until Christmas gives us enough time to make a choice about what we want to do and what is "do-able."

The barrage of ideas for food, gifts, decorating, and entertaining offered by Good and other speakers will either make the holiday

music are as much a part of Polish tradition as it is in America, Anastasio said of the similarities between the two countries.

"We decorate to the hilt and the month is full of anticipation and planning," she said.

Christmas Eve is considered the most sacred. There is always a thin layer of hay placed beneath a crisp white linen tablecloth to remind people of where Christ was born. An empty place is always set as a reminder that Christ is a welcomed guest. A door is always left open as a sign of welcome as a guest in the home is considered as Christ in the home. At the same time, Polish people strive to serve an even num-

### Nut Or Poppy Seed Rolls

1 pound butter  
1 small yeast dissolved in 1/4 cup warm water  
4 cups flour  
4 eggs, beaten  
Mix butter and flour with pastry blender, add eggs and yeast. Knead for 8-10 minutes until it does not stick to hands. Shape into a roll and wrap in cloth and refrigerate overnight.

Divide dough into 4 portions. Roll dough on granulated sugar and spread filling on dough. Roll like jelly roll. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Before putting rolls in oven, brush top with a beaten egg.

**Nut filling:**  
1 1/2 cups nuts, chopped  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup milk  
1 tablespoon butter  
Mix nuts, sugar, milk, and butter and boil until thick (approximately 10-15 minutes). Cool.

**Poppy seed filling:**  
1/2 pound poppy seed  
1/2 cup raisins  
1 cup sugar  
1/2 cup milk  
1 tablespoon honey or molasses  
Mix poppy seed, raisins, sugar, milk, honey or molasses. Boil until thick, approximately 15-20 minutes. Let cool before spreading.

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Susan Szczesniak-Anastasio and her son Thomas dress in native Polish costumes to share how Christmas is celebrated in Poland.

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season more enjoyable or more hectic, depending on each person's response.

The person who wants to try everything presented will probably end up frazzled and short tempered, but those who select and begin what they consider most important will probably find the holidays enjoyable.

Good shared selections from a book she authored, "Christmas Ideas For Family." Ideas for decorating, food, advent, music, giving, receiving, shopping, and celebrating focus on things anyone can do without a lot of expense or major projects.

"If it's more of a burden than fun, then don't do it," Good said about deciding whether or not to continue a Christmas tradition.

### Polish

#### Holiday Traditions

Susan Szczesniak-Anastasio and her 3-year-old son Thomas dressed in native Polish costumes to share how Christmas is celebrated in Poland.

Food, decorating, family, and

ber of guests because according to superstition, serving an uneven number is a foreboding of death to a family member.

Supper begins when the first star is sighted in the sky. The host couple begins the meal with the breaking of unleavened bread which they exchange with each other and hug and kiss. Guests follow the example.

If there has been any animosity between family members and guests, it is forgiven and forgotten at Christmas when good harmony prevails.

Much of the food served traditionally in Polish homes holds a symbolic meaning. For example, poppy seeds is a symbolic gesture of a good night's sleep and honey the sweetness of toil.

Fay Strickler, home economist, shared many Polish recipes. Here are a few:



Workshop participants sampled Polish Torte and Nut Roll made, from left, by Marianne Gavel, Fay Strickler, and Greta Scully.



Phyllis Pellman Good shares ideas for celebrating Christmas from her book "Christmas Ideas For Families."



Debbie Weaver, left, and Debbie Hartman display gourmet pantry gifts that are easy and fun to make in the kitchen.