

# Memories

Okay, we did all of the Thanksgiving memories last month and now it's December. So, we are going to do some Christmas memories.

Presents...hmmm...– where to hide them in a small house with six inquisitive free-range children? My closet was bulging and my bed was six inches up off the floor. A lock on the door was the only solution.

I started a tradition when the three boys were little and continued it after the next three arrived on the scene. That tradition was baking cookies on their own. I would mix up the sugar cookie dough the day before the baking fiasco. I'd put it in the refrigerator overnight and the next morning after breakfast the fun began. Out came the dough, raisins, chocolate chips, sprinkles of all colors, walnut pieces, colored sugars, maraschino cherries (red and green) and Hershey kisses. I do believe that more of them got eaten than put on cookies.

I put the plastic rollout sheet on the table along with a bag of flour to sprinkle on it so nothing sticks. I set the oven temperature, got out the cookie sheets and cookie cutters and left the kitchen. I said a silent prayer when I walked out. "Please, God, don't let them burn the kitchen down." They never did.

By lunch time we had a few burned cookies, a little smoke, some misshaped lumps, some really wild decorations on some but we had plates of cookies. Mission accomplished. Eating them was your choice.

Presents-cookies-decorations-tree decorations were easy as I could do them when the kids were in school. Wreath on the door and a few lights around the kitchen window-Christmas cards were hung around the doorway that led into the hall.

Ah, the tree. It had to be a real one. Picking one out was an adventure. Everybody liked a different one. At last we got one, mortgaged the house to pay for it, wrestled it into the trunk and headed home. It always had to be cut off at the bottom. I don't know why I thought that we had a 10 foot ceiling. Lights were next. They were always tangled. If the kids put on the lights and the ornaments they all end up on the bottom of the tree (they were too short). After they went to bed the tree was redone and looked beautiful. That was until the cat discovered the ornaments and knocked them down. Now everything was at the top of the tree because we were tall. The tree smelled good and I would sweep needles until July.

I stayed up late to wrap presents and got up early as the kids were up. I cooked, cleaned up wrapping paper and bows, stacked empty boxes, did dishes and finally collapsed on the couch. Everybody was fed and happy, but tired. The tree looked pretty even if the ornaments were up out of the cat's reach. All was well. Peace began...Ah, the memories.

May all have a blessed Christmas and a safe New Year.

See you next year.

~Judy~