

Extension Notes

Personal Column for December 21, 2010

By Gary Hall, ISU Regional Extension Education Director

Twas An Extension Christmas

ISU Extension offers so much for everyone, young and old. With the help of this classic tale you may discover some of what Extension might offer you and your family.

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the Extension house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse
Because we knew how to keep them out of our house.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care
To avoid any fire hazard scare
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

After a healthy nutritious meal,
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of 4-H projects danced in their heads.
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just turned off the budgeting webcast for a long winter's nap.

When out on the properly fertilized and aerated lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Pulled down the energy efficient blinds and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to recommended landscape plants below.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight properly fed tiny reindeer.

With a little old certified safe driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St Nick.
More rapid than grain or livestock market movements his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

"Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, on Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the monitored grain bin! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little trimmed hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the cleaned chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in cultivated fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished from other homes with ashes and soot.
A bundle of educational toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like an Extension speaker, just opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled with knowledge! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like recommended roses, his nose like a properly pruned cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the hair on his head was as white as the snow.

The stump of an unlit pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke of his breath encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face
And you could tell he had been working on reducing a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly!

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And left Extension information, filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.
And avoiding knocking over the radon detector, laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a noxious thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, 'ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Extension Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

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