

Create Christmas spirit on a budget

Not all Christmas gifts cost money. Many of us feel a financial squeeze this time of year—we want to give special gifts to those special people, but often we just don't have the money.

But, there are many gifts which are sure to be appreciated for their uniqueness and personal touch, but which cost little or nothing in monetary terms.

Offer some cooking lessons and a notebook of your favorite recipes.

If you know someone who keeps their checkbook in a

state of precarious disorder, offer to balance it for them.

Or, volunteer a few hours of typing to that college student on your list.

If you're handy around the house, offer your services as a carpenter. After all, everybody needs something done around the house or apartment.

Youngsters could volunteer to do the dishes for a month or clean out the basement.

Just remember, Christmas gifts should come from the heart—and hearts don't need wrappings.

PERSONALIZED CHRISTMAS BOOK

Parents can give their children the most unique Christmas Book they'll ever get by simply putting together art work that they've already done, either on their own or for school projects.

Basically, all that has to be done is for parents to collect their child's accumulated art work, and then create a story around it.

By simply putting the drawings between the covers of a hardcover sketchbook, and by tying them together with some simple prose, you can give your child a flattering and inexpensive gift.

If you like, you can paste the drawings on different colors of paper.

The part of the book that your child will like the most will probably be the beginning, where you can prominently display your child's name, giving him or her the artistic credit, due a budding Da Vinci.



THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CARD

What probably was the first Christmas card appeared in 1843, and was designed by John Colcott Horsley.

Horsley was a fashionable artist of the day, and also a strict Victorian who led a campaign against the use of nude models.

His first Christmas card was commissioned by Sir Henry Cole, and took the form of an oblong sheet with three illustrations. In the center was a drawing of a middle class Victorian family at Christmas dinner.

On one side, was a depiction of a good Samaritan feeding the hungry. On the other, a drawing showed another good soul clothing the naked, though in this case the supposedly naked figure was drawn fully clothed.

Horsley presented his card to Sir Henry Cole with the inscription: "To his good friend Cole/Who's a merry young soul/And a merry young soul is he/And may be for many years to come/Hooray!"



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