

Traditions

from page C4

message on a piece of memorabilia, which can be added to the scrapbook. Use videotape for interviewing family members during special events. As the years go by, those videos will become priceless.

Is your refrigerator covered with the kids' artwork? What do you do with all those masterpieces? If you feel guilty throwing them away, but you just have no place to store them, pull out your camera and take a picture. Keep a photo book just for

refrigerator art. At the end of each school year, pull out the photos for the whole family to admire. It will be a tradition the kids will take pride in.

Family traditions do not have to be perfect. Life doesn't usually work out exactly as it is planned, especially when kids are involved. There are always the unexpected spills, disagreements, and disasters that set things awry. Experiencing your family's traditions by accepting any imperfections and embracing

the event as it happens is far more rewarding than crying over yet another failed attempt at perfection. By dealing positively with the unexpected, your family traditions may even take on added meaning and joy.

Every year, my family looks forward to decorating Christmas cookies. From the time the kids were able to climb on a stool to reach the kitchen counter, they would decorate cut out cookie shapes with colorful frostings and sprinkles. We weren't going

for perfection, just for a happy shared experience. As the boys got older, they became more creative in their decorating.

The Santa cookies started wearing sunglasses, the snowmen had tattoos and eye patches, and the reindeer cookies had spiked collars. The boys roared with laughter as they admired their creativity. At first, I was not amused. By reminding myself that traditions are more enjoyable if they are adjusted to fit the ages and stages of the kids, I was able to relax. By

adapting to their pre-adolescent playfulness, our tradition happily continued. If I had rigidly insisted that they conform to my personal image of how the cookies were to be decorated, I would have robbed them of the fun of experimenting with their own unique ideas and would have diminished the joy of our tradition.

Taking time to participate in traditions brings families closer. Those warm feelings strengthen each family member. Children draw on that strength in difficult

times, and continue those traditions when raising children of their own. Today's routines will be tomorrow's memories. Make those memories rich and satisfying by creating your own special family traditions.

Marilyn Suttle brings skill building seminars to corporate and educational settings. Email her at MsSuttle@aol.com or visit her web site: <http://Members.aol.com/MsSuttle>

Singles

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Daly and Five Mile Road).

■ 11:30 a.m. Mass at St. Aidan Church (Farmington Road north of Six Mile).

■ Tuesday's: Coffee and Conversation at 7 p.m. at Thomas' Family Dining (33971 Plymouth Road) Livonia.

PARENTS WITHOUT PARTNERS
Parents without Partners, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to the single-parent family. We offer educational, social, and recreational activities for single parents and their children. Dues \$30 per year. Call Ann Arbor Chapter #38 call (734) 973-1933 or visit the Web page at www.aapwp.org.

TALK IT OVER

TIO meets the second Friday of each month in Knox Hall from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Free will offering. Coffee/cookies served. Call (248) 374-6920.

METROPOLITAN PROFESSIONALS

The MSP invite you to meet new friends, dance and socialize 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. There will be a Top 40 D.J., cash bar and hors d'oeuvres (8-9 p.m.) The ballrooms are non-smoking.

■ Euchre, pinocle, bridge and dinner from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Cowley's Old Village Inn, every Monday. (33338 Grand River, Farmington). All skill levels.

■ Volleyball: 6:45-9:45 a.m. every Tuesday through April. Bloomfield Hills Middle School, Quenton Road just west of Telegraph.

CHRISTIAN SINGLES

Attention singles - Christian Singles Today Interactive Saturday Fellowship is held 7-11 p.m. at The Church of the Savior (Five Mile Road at Newburgh) in Livonia. Call (248) 478-1410 for information.

WEDNESDAY SUBURBAN SINGLES

Wednesday Suburban Singles Dance Parties Inc. meet every Wednesday at The Warren Chateau Banquet Center (10 Mile Road one block east of Mound) in Warren from 8 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Open to the public - ages 21 and up. Proper attire is recommended (no jeans). The Single Mingle Dance costs \$5; \$4 before 8:30 p.m. For information call the hotline at (313) 842-0443.

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