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Mary Alice O'Toole displays crafts and tree trims from her Christmas decorating class at Hudson's.

## Select theme for tree

By MARY JO BEIL

Christmas trees come in all sizes and shapes and ideas for decorating them are just as varied.

Mary Alice O'Toole, who holds classes in tree trimming and Christmas crafts at the Hudson stores, has many suggestions for seasonal artistry.

"For a truly beautiful tree, you should choose a theme and follow through on it," she said.

Mrs. Taylor, a designer for the American Tree and Wreath company, mentioned several themes which are currently popular.

"Color themes have traditionally been prominent," she said, "and ethnic and hobby themes are on the rise. But I would say that nostalgia is the 'in' thing right now."

To prove the predominance of nostalgia, Mrs. O'Toole pointed to a wide display of corn husk angels, gingham ribboned and wooden ornaments and Raggedy Ann and Andy figures.

"THERE'S ALSO a great deal of patchwork and polka dots on this year's trimmings," she said.

Mrs. O'Toole said that when a nostalgia theme is chosen, there is no need for a tree to look drab.

"You can use the shiny ornaments along with the dull-finished, nostalgic pieces, to brighten up the tree," she said, "as long as you have continuity."

Mrs. O'Toole said that this continuity is achieved by making one theme predominate and adding color and ornaments that complement the theme.

"But it is all a matter of individual taste," she said.

It is this individuality that gave rise to the hobby and ethnic trees, Mrs. O'Toole added.

"THERE ARE Japanese, Eskimo and Mexican doll ornaments," she said. "And for the hobbyists, there are small birds for the hunter and colorful ball-fringe strands or drapery cords for the do-it-yourselfers."

Mrs. O'Toole said children should also be able to individualize their own tree.

"Decorating the Christmas tree needn't be a chore," she said. "Rather than have the kids interfere with the decorating of your tree, give them their own to trim and retrim as often as they wish."

Mrs. O'Toole said her daughter uses novelty life savers and candy canes and her son prefers small sports figures and Disney characters.

Having offered her suggestions for a prettier tree, Mrs. O'Toole said people should not be dismayed about the prospects of decorating their tree.

"Just remember," she said, "there is no such thing as an ugly Christmas tree."

## Club seeks materials

Any kind of permanent greens or flowers that can be made into arrangements are needed by members of the 4th Trailblazers.

Club members are hoping to gather enough of the permanent (rather than fresh or dried) material to make flower arrangements for 40 patients in Northville Hospital to be given during the holiday season.

Laurie Smalis, leader of the club, said the goal is 40, but members will make as many potted, permanent arrangements as they get material for.

Eight members of the club who are working on a horticultural project this year initiated the project and received the support of the entire 80 members to help with the gift giving.

They are gathering containers now, approximately four inches in diameter and four inches high and will also accept any donations of this type of container, ribbon, clay, or any item that might add to making a colorful gift.

Persons who have anything to donate are asked to call Ms. Smalis at 474-5967.

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9 P.M. to 4 A.M.

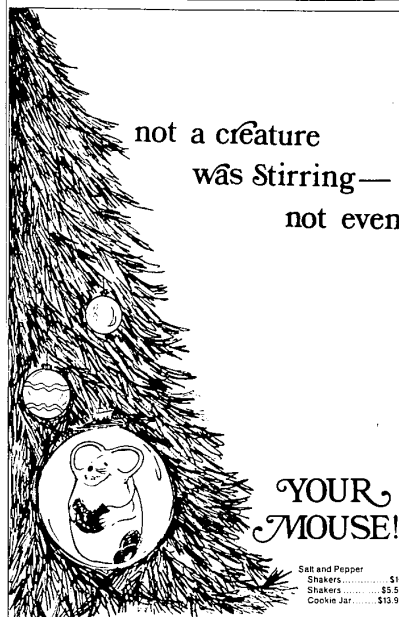
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