



Credits

THIS special holiday gift guide appearing in all 12 Observer & Eccentric Newspapers was coordinated by Marie McGee, special sections editor.

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The cover design was by Glenna Merrillat, Creative Services director.

Our special thanks to the Talent Shop for providing models: Kristen Kennedy, Barbara Patten and Allan Goetz; and to Jennifer Phillips.

Questions should be directed to McGee at 591-2300, Ext. 313.

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No need to stuff it in a box — just hang it in the closet and watch the reaction to this natural full-length cross-fox coat with horizontal sleeves. \$11,000, Bricker-Tunis Furs, W. Bloomfield.

Holiday customs

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would like to receive in order of importance. They can draw pictures of the gifts, too. Keep the letters to put in a scrapbook to show them when they're older.

St. Nicholas was a much-loved bishop who lived in part of the Roman Empire during the 4th or 5th century. He was famous for his love of children, for whom he performed miracles of healing. He also was known for giving gifts in secret.

In the early 1800s, Professor Clement C. Moore described St. Nicholas in a poem he wrote to entertain his children, titled "The Night Before Christmas." The poem became so popular that since then, Americans have thought of St. Nicholas as "a jolly old elf" with a round belly, a white beard and twinkling eyes.

WHAT BETTER WAY to make your children feel special than to share with them a live performance of Tchaikovsky melodies, complete with feather-light fairies that seem to float across the stage.

First be sure they understand "The

Nutcracker" story line. Brightly painted wooden nutcrackers that looked like soldiers were popular toys in Russia 150 years ago. Two children, Clara and Fritz, receive one on Christmas Eve.

The dolls come to life and lead the toy soldiers to win a battle against the Mouse King. Afterward, the nutcracker turns into a handsome prince who takes Clara into an enchanted kingdom where they find the Sugarplum Fairy.

TRADITIONALLY, THE Jewish holiday of Hanukkah is celebrated by lighting a candle on the many-branched menorah each night. In many families, children receive one gift after each candle-lighting.

Elnine Bierbaum of Georgia became concerned that the eight-day holiday was turning into "an orgy of gift-giving." She makes a tradition of having her children donate one of their new Hanukkah toys to the children's ward at a local hospital.

Hanukkah is older than Christmas. The word means "dedication," to commemorate the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem after the Jews successfully fought to reclaim it from their enemies.