

James Snyder

The Perfect Christmas Tree

A Christmas tree is more than just a tree. It's a place to store memories. Our Christmas tree this year was dedicated to the memory of my father.

My dad died 5 years ago in a car accident. Christmas was his favorite season. This is the first real Christmas tree we've had since he died.

Every year we would cut down a tree and decorate it with ornaments and an angel. This year we have special ornaments. We had a Christmas party and invited people who knew my dad. We asked that they make an ornament or write a memory to place on the tree.

On Christmas Eve we read the "memories" of my father that were on the tree. My favorite is from Arty Sullivan and he made a bookmark that says "I am home in Heaven, Dear ones; Oh, so happy and so bright! There is perfect joy and beauty in this everlasting light. All the pain and grief is over, every relentless tossing passed: I am now at peace forever. Safely home in Heaven at last." Other ornaments included a handwritten message on a rolled up spinach label because my dad loved spinach, or a piece of paper folded to fit in a stocking that held the memory. These memories make me feel very good, as I was only 7 when he died. Although it's sad to go through another Christmas without him, I know that my mom, sister, and I will all be fine. I also get a lot of support from my step-dad whom my mom married 3 years ago.

This tree is all about my dad, Scott Taylor Snyder, from the ornaments to the base, which he made himself. This isn't just a tree; it's a tribute to my father