

Help Santa Find a Perfect Tree Contest

Hillary Jackson

Age: 15

Snow is falling. The trees and ground are covered with a white blanket. It is the perfect picture of a Vermont winter wonderland. My dog gallops and jumps through the snow piles. Her once dark fur is now completely white with sparkling snow. My brother and I play hide-and-seek in the trees while we look for the perfect tree to cut. My parents walk hand-in-hand admiring every tree before we pick which one is right for us.

I love how time freezes for just a little while so we can enjoy this time together. Everyone in my family is incredibly busy. It is hard to spend time together. I take comfort in knowing that cutting our tree and decorating it will always be a guaranteed time we will always share.

The ornaments we put on our tree let us reminisce about the joyful times we have spent with each other. We have made many homemade ornaments over the years. My Grandma is a professional China painter. We remember Grandma teaching us to China paint these delicate ornaments. Every year my aunt and uncle make our family a new ornament. I love how they can take something so simple such as Baby Jesus in the manger and make it breathtaking. I am a ballet dancer and hang many ornaments of dancers that spin when attached to a light. Dad and I hook these up together and find a good place for them to twirl. My parents have ornaments that they have gathered from all over the world. We always love hearing their stories of Germany as we put on the German pewter ornaments and Mom's stories of Okinawa, Japan where she taught.

While we decorate the tree, we sing along to Christmas carols and sip hot cocoa. Simple times, when we just spend time together, are valuable memories. My family means so much to me. Being with them, especially during the Christmas season, makes me feel very fortunate that I have such a magnificent family. My Christmas tree is perfect because it brings my family together. We forget about our hectic schedules. We spend time remembering all the special times we have shared. Whenever I smell the scent of fresh pine, I remember how important cutting down and decorating the Christmas tree is to my family. It makes me thankful that I will always have this special time to spend with the people I love most.