

Ag Column Article
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A Real Tree is a Family Affair

Searching for that “just right” Christmas tree can be a great family trip. Whether you go just down the road or on a real “road trip”, take the family shopping for a tree this year.

I have many childhood memories and memories with my own children of hunting for a tree. It’s always a real challenge to get everybody to agree, but in the end the process brings the family together.

During my childhood years, we would go to the local tree lot which was run by the local ruitan or optimist club. I can still remember the smell of the trees, the lights, and the unbelievable number of trees to choose from at the lot. Of course, it was usually cold. They often had an old stove or just a fire burning for warmth.

When our children were young and money was short, I can even remember going to a nearby field and cutting a cedar. Like my family says, they weren’t nearly as pretty as a Fraser Fir, but there was something special about cutting a cedar in the field and bringing it home.

We have even gone to a Christmas tree farm before. This trip was usually an all-day affair. We enjoyed walking through the field and cutting down our own tree. Seeing the tree growing in the field and then cutting the tree did add something special to the hunt.

Then, the decorating part was always interesting. Seems like each year, the numbers of boxes of decorations would grow. We have even had more than one tree. Stringing the lights, placing the ornaments, and oh my tinsel all came together in a magical way. We were sure to find tinsel somewhere in the house for several months. It’s about like finding sand in your car several months after returning from the beach –LOL!

I remember always thinking that even one of the ugliest trees could be beautiful once all the decorations, lights, and angel were on the tree with the presents underneath. An area without good branching was always a good place to hang a larger ornament.

With the tree decorated, we were always enjoyed the tree because we always contributed to the effort. From mounting the stand to topping with the tree with an angel, it was a special family-building process. There was always trimmings from the tree to decorate the mantle over the fireplace and to make wreaths. Live trees also brought the responsibility of watering the tree. This offered an opportunity to build responsibility with our children.

So, I encourage you to take the family Christmas tree shopping. I know you’ll bring home more than a tree. You and your children will have memories to share with each passing year.

