

# HOLIDAY Hints

## Seasonal Traditions A “Clause” For Celebration

(NAPSA)—No matter how your family celebrates the holidays, whether following age-old traditions or creating new ones, they are a time for remembering the past and celebrating the future.

Here’s a little background on some of the more well-known holiday traditions that are still part of modern celebrations:

• **Christmas stockings**—The tradition of stockings started in Holland during the 16th century. Kids would leave clogs filled with hay near the fireplace for Santa’s reindeer. Santa would then leave behind treats for the children. Eventually, people began using stockings instead.

• **Mistletoe**—The Celts used to believe that mistletoe was a powerful charm against lightning, thunder and other scary things. The Norse thought the plant was a symbol of peace. Warriors who met under the green leaves would not fight and warring couples would “kiss and make up.”

• **Christmas carols**—Perhaps you gather around the piano or go caroling in the streets with friends, but music is an essential part of holiday celebrations. Although it is unclear what might be considered the first carol, one of the earliest is the Latin hymn “A Babe Is Born in Bethlehem,” dating from the 14th century. While there are many songs about the holiday, carols generally deal with traditional and religious themes.



**A popular film, now available on DVD, encourages families to sing seasonal songs together.**

• **Christmas movies**—Nothing beats cuddling up under a blanket and watching a favorite flick—and holiday-themed films are nearly as old as the medium itself. Perhaps the oldest is “The Night Before Christmas” from 1905. This 9-minute short is, basically, the familiar story from Clement Clarke Moore’s “A Visit from St. Nicholas,” told with miniatures. Since then, there have been dozens of flicks that have spread holiday cheer, from the iconic “Miracle on 34th Street” and “It’s a Wonderful Life” to such modern classics as “A Christmas Story,” “Elf” and the “Santa Clause” films starring Tim Allen.

“Santa Clause 3,” last year’s holiday hit, is now available on DVD from Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment. Among the bonus features on the DVD is the all-new “Christmas Carol-Oke,” a Christmas caroling guide for the entire family. To learn more, visit [www.disneyshopping.com](http://www.disneyshopping.com).