

Holiday Hints

Decorating On A Budget

(NAPS)—Deck the halls this holiday season—and don't let a tight holiday decorating budget turn you into a Scrooge. It can be easy and affordable to decorate a lot, without spending a lot. Heeding these hints from the experts may help you save money and have some holiday fun:

- **Decorate your own wreath:** Craft wreaths come in many varieties, from realistic looking PVC to willow. Buy a holiday floral bush and cut the heads off (they're all individually wired) and fasten them to the wreath. Add some baby's breath as snow and you have a beautiful wreath.

- **Drape a garland:** To easily bring a festive look to a room, drape a garland over doors and windows. Make a centerpiece from candles. Combine several pillar candles of various heights on a ceramic or other nonflammable dish; surround with inexpensive pine garland stems to hide the dish. Add some glitter or snow.

- **A mini tree—**one to three feet tall—can add a holiday touch to your desktop or table. Decorate your own or buy an inexpensive, predecorated tree. After the holidays, just place in a plastic bag for storage—no need to undecorate. If you're tired of stringing Christmas lights on your full-size tree, buy a prelit artificial tree.

- **Shop smart.** You can find many holiday decorations at prices lower than wholesale at popular closeout retailers such as Big Lots, Pic 'N' Save and Mac Frugal's. Among the largest seasonal retailers in the country, these stores have a huge selection of fall and holiday decorating items, decorative pieces you won't find elsewhere. Due to their buying power and sources, these closeout stores can get custom-



Holidays can be more delightful with budget-stretching decorating ideas.

made merchandise in large quantities at rock bottom pricing from nut dishes and figurines to ceramic houses and crafts. The savings are passed on to shoppers.

- **Think theme.** Studies show that the average person wraps 35 gifts for Christmas. With unique matching lines of tins, bags and gift bags, including the whimsical "Barnyard Christmas" selection, it's easy and affordable to coordinate your holiday wrapping and decorating. Imagine buying gift bags for just 69 cents, 6-foot artificial trees for only \$14.99, and holiday cards at "day after Christmas" prices! Decorate from room to room using different themes. Highlight your favorite sport or your passion for teddy bears. When prices are this low, there's no limit to where your holiday imagination can take you.

To learn more about closeout shopping, or to find the location of a Big Lots store near you, visit the Web site at www.biglots.com. Big Lots, Inc. (which includes Big Lots, Pic 'N' Save, and Mac Frugal's) operates more than 1,300 retail stores in 46 states.