

## Verburg home

**Christmas is indeed** about making memories, particularly for children who carry the sights, smells and tastes of that day with them into adulthood. Dr. Daniel and Jeannean Verburg's five children know that first-hand, with a mom who loves decorating for the holidays around the calendar, from St. Patrick's Day to Halloween. And you should see what she pulls out for Christmas.

"I just love to decorate for Christmas," said Jeannean. "I put a tree in every single room. They all wanted a tree in their room growing up."

(That meant, for the record, 13 trees, including those in the living room, kitchen and other areas.)

The Verburgs have lived in their welcoming Petoskey home since 1977, raising their five children and now entertaining the lot of them and their eight grandchildren often, particularly at the holidays. The couple recently remodeled and converted one bedroom into a more spacious formal dining room, where there is plenty of room for a Christmas tree, decorations, table seating eight and a hutch and buffet piece that stretches the length of one wall.

When she sets the table for the holiday, not one inch is left un-Christmasized (we made that word up, because there is no other way to describe this dining room). She has Christmas tree china, gold-rimmed water and wine glasses, holly berries and place markers made from ornaments.

Jeannean is a collector of most things Christmas, including hundreds of Santa figurines and Nutcracker wooden dolls. She has Christmas sweaters, Christmas



music piping through the sound system and even spray-snow for the windows to create the mood just right.

Kathy McCreight, of Classic Cabinets and Interiors, who has worked with Jeannean on several extensive interior design projects in the home, said when HomeLife contacted her for a Christmas kitchen to feature, she had no second thoughts about who to ask.

And neither do the neighbors and local Girl Scout troops, who contact Jeannean for tours of the holiday wonderland from Thanksgiving until Jan. 6 each new year. That is a highlight of her efforts, she said, as was the time when a tree she had nurtured from a seedling was finally big enough to grace Main Street in Harbor Springs for its annual tree-lighting ceremony.

"It was right in the middle of the front yard, and Dan would say, 'Is it big enough yet?' each year, and I would say, 'No, not yet,'" she laughed.

And when it did make it to town, Jeannean was asked to throw the switch to light it up. "Little did I know that when the switch was pulled, it was going to light up the whole town," she recalled. "That was the highlight of my holidays." HL



Verburg home table settings and arrangement assistance, Kathy McCreight, Classic Cabinets and Interiors, Petoskey (pictured, left, with homeowner Jeannean Verburg).

