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Holiday 2007

Interviews

- Sound healer Tom Kenyon
- Apotheke in Ypsilanti, MI
- Lavender Moon Herb Gardens in Honeoye Falls, NY

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- Realizing the power of words and water
- Focus on peace this holiday season
- Building altars in your store
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Product Reviews

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- Pagan items, peace gifts, holiday music, and new releases
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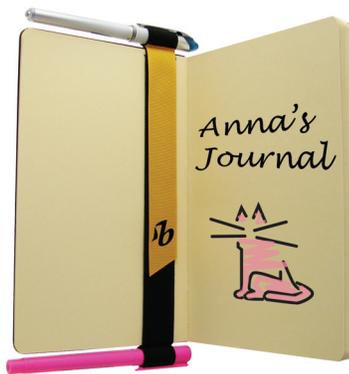
Stocking Stuffers

I love Christmas. Well, let's say I love to celebrate Christmas but am relieved when the weeks leading up to the last days of December are over. Being in retail can put a damper on the holiday spirit because of the long hours and extra work associated with the time of year.

While there are hundreds of different traditions and celebrations observed during the winter holidays around the world, nothing is quite as recognizable as a bright red stocking, trimmed in white fur and hung by the chimney, waiting to be filled with gifts by Father Christmas, Sinterklaas, St. Nicholas, or Santa Claus. According to Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia (www.wikipedia.org), the modern tradition of hanging stockings began quite accidentally when, in the 16th century, German children left freshly washed socks hanging by the fire to dry and found them brimming with small gifts and fruits on Christmas morning. In Holland, children leave wooden clogs filled with straw on the hearth for Sinterklaas' reindeer. In Hungary, they leave shoes on the windowsill, anticipating special gifts to be brought during the night. In Europe, stockings are filled with gifts to stimulate all the senses: fruit or candy to eat; a toy or other item that makes noise; an item that is visually pleasing like jewelry, cufflinks, or a coloring book; something that has tactile appeal such as modeling clay or a soft toy; and an item with a distinctive scent such as cologne or perfume.

Many of the modern-day traditions of wreaths, Yule logs, holly, and mistletoe stem from ancient Pagan rituals. And it is no surprise that gifts were exchanged at Yule celebrations long before the three Magi brought gifts to the manger.

Look around your store and be creative with things you may already offer that fit the confines of a stocking. Here are some physically small gifts that are packed with thoughtfulness and fit nicely in a stocking, gift bag, or holiday gift basket—and all bring smiles to the recipients. — Jean Haller



The elastic BookSling holds a pen or highlighter while marking a page in a book or journal.

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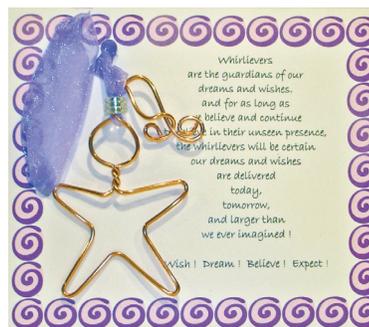
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