

THIS FAMILY HAS OPEN HOUSE TO AS MANY AS 10,000 PERSONS EVERY YEAR IN YULE SEASON

By ANN BARTOS RUSHTON

NEA, Special Correspondent

DENVER, Colo. (NEA) — A

Christmas "open house" at the

home of Mr. and Mrs. Gano Senter

of Denver is like other Christmas

"open houses" in only one respect.

People come in for short visits,

but they're not just friends and

relatives. There have been 10,000

of them each Yule season for the

past 20 years. Usually they're

complete strangers. And they don't

come to see the Senter.

They cross the Senter threshold

to see what well may be the

world's most dazzling private

Christmas tree. It cost a small

fortune, is exhibited with show-

manship and never fails to enthrall

spectators.

The Senter Christmas tree is

about 10 small trees and 50 to 75

extra limbs, all firmly put together

by a hired carpenter. The height

of the tree—11 feet—is limited by

the height of the Senter living

room.

The tree has to be super-strong

to support 4,000 ornaments and 700

colored lights that hang on it. The

whole works weigh about 700

pounds.

Mrs. Senter is sole tree-trimmer.

The job takes her one week, some-

times 14 to 16 hours a day. When

it is finished hardly a needle is

visible, only lights and a solid mass

of glittering, priceless, intricate

ornaments.

Public showings begin on Christ-

mas day at dusk when the Senter

turn on 1,000 colored lights that

outline the wrought-iron fence out-

side their home. The tree stays

up until Jan. 3.

People waiting on sidewalks and

in parked cars begin to file through

the Senter portals in groups of 40.

They are guided in a specific in-

door traffic pattern.

The Senter estimate they've

paid out at least \$10,000 for tree

price-brace, which includes a sil-

ver lame cloth under it and a

200-piece miniature village that

flanks it. Many decorations are

gifts of well-wishers.

While guests gaze at the tree in

the living room, an organ in the

basement plays Christmas carols,

birds twitter (it is really a French

music box) and a revolving wheel

casts changing colors upon the

spectacle.

Senter stands by to show special

ornaments like the tiny harp whose

strings are minute glass vials of

perfume, giant Swedish snow-

flakes flecked with colored stones,

Moses-in-the-bullrushes, a mini-

ature organ that plays.

After 15 minutes the house lights

dim, the show is over, and another

group is ushered in.

The Senter cater to children.

Most of their private showings are

for orphans, Scout groups and crippled

youngsters and are followed

by hilarious parties in the Senter

rumpus room.

Mrs. Senter takes care to hang

children's favorite ornaments in

approximately the same spots each

year.

Once a little boy cried, "Where's

the littlest angel, he was right

here last year!"

Senter, who spends a great deal

of time watching his wife trim

the tree just to be able to cope

with such emergencies, comforted

the lad by finding the favored or-

nament a couple of branches away,

rumpus room.

The front row is generally re-

served for youngsters. One father

discovered he was minus a son af-

ter his group had made its exit to

the street. After a frantic search

in the cold night outdoors and the

milling crowds inside, the lad was

found squatted in kiddies' row. He

had been there all the while, see-

ing the show for the third time.

"We are happy to see others

happy," the Senter simply offer

as their motive, although they con-

fess the crowds sometimes tire

them to the point where they

"have been tempted to leave im-

mediately for a foreign country."

But each year they renew the pro-

ject with vim, vigor and orna-

ments surpassing those of the year

before.

They do not solicit visitors. Ad-

vertising is solely word-of-mouth

of others, and the tree has never

been publicized outside Colorado yet.

Spectators come from all sections

of the world.

Two years ago a group of ma-

harajas from India were in Colo-

rado to study engineering projects

and dropped in to see the tree.

The Senter received in the mail

weeks later some intricate hand-

carved ivory ornaments, gifts of

princes whom their project had

pleased.



ALL, DECKED OUT for a trip in outer space is 7-year-old Robert Ybarra, who handles his ray gun like a real Space Cadet. Robert is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Don Ybarra, 807 California. The space ensemble is on display at J. J. Newberry's.



WOOLWORTH'S walking doll, outfitted like a princess, draws the admiration of another 'doll,' Jean Dee Bispham, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Bispham, 2555 Garden.



THANKS, FOLKS...

for the wonderful reception you have given us in our new studio. Thanks, too, for making our "Child Personality" contest an overwhelming success. Now... Christmas is so-o-o near and time is precious. We will gladly make appointments for evenings and Sundays to accommodate those who can not conveniently come in during our regular hours. REMEMBER... YOUR PORTRAIT is a gift that will be treasured always by those who love you. Individual portraits or family groups can quickly and inexpensively solve a dozen gift problems.

Harriet and Jim Floyd

FINE PHOTOGRAPHY

Floyd

at underwood's
706 Main Street
Klamath Falls, Oregon
STUDIO PHONE 4526



DOWN FROM THE ATTIC come 4,000 ornaments as Mrs. Gano Senter, aided by granddaughters, readies the trimmings for the family's famous Christmas tree at their home in Denver.



BIG SMILES light the faces of Joe De Grande, 9, and Dan Smith, 8, both of Keno, as they look over a scale model, complete with hydraulic lift, of an earth mover. This little item is on sale at Brown's in Klamath Falls.

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5⁶⁹ to 16⁹⁵

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