AMERICAN SALON

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STORY
TOLD
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Be Dazzled

All-Nutrient embellishes hair with rich hues

BETTER BUSINESS

WRITTEN BY **Andrea Dawn Clark**

IDEAS THAT INSPIRE SUCCESS

'TIS THE SEASON

Smart ideas to make your salon more festive and profitable during the holidays.

Steve Hightower in his signature holiday wear

Gift shopping, big family gatherings and tables loaded with tasty treats—it's that time of year when everyone is filled with the holiday spirit. And, by embracing the joy of the season, you can uplift your staff and boost sales. Give your salon a touch of holiday magic with these seasonal ideas.
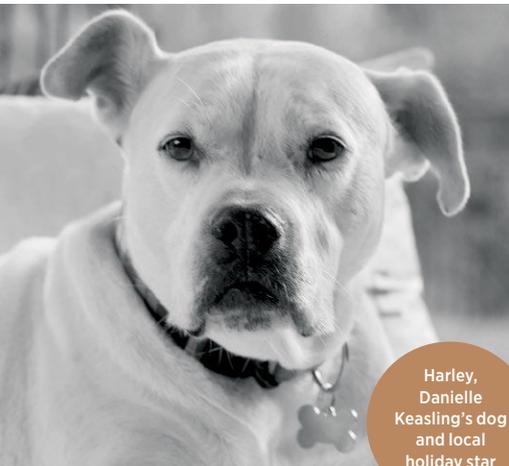
Harley, Danielle Keasling's dog and local holiday star

✳ GONE TO THE DOGS

At Salon Karma we know how to get into the holiday spirit. Everyone loves decorating the salon with lights and ornaments. We reward 20 of our top guests with gift baskets. And, at our holiday open house, the mimosas and mulled wine are seriously flowing. But the biggest holiday event at Salon Karma is actually a fundraiser my dog Harley puts on for the local shelters. We call it "Harley's Tree of Happiness." Eight years ago, I found Harley on the side of the road. I treated him for heartworms and ended up making him a part of my family. Now, he always comes with me to the salon and has become something of a local celebrity.

During the holiday season guests donate to an animal rescue organization and get a picture of Harley to sign. We put up all the photos in the salon, and by the end of December, the walls are plastered with Harley pictures. The staff also delivers holiday gifts to animal shelters and gives shelter volunteers free haircuts. Channeling Harley's sweet spirit and helping animals in need puts everyone in a happy, giving mood.—*Danielle Keasling, Matrix Artistic Director and owner of Salon Karma, Bluffton, SC*

✳ LET THE GAMES BEGIN

My salon staff takes the holidays to a competitive level to engage guests. When a holiday gift set is purchased, one entry is put into a drawing. If that entry is pulled, it's a prize for both the guest and their stylist. Last year we gave away a smart TV—I'm still bitter for not winning. We also have a "best-decorated station" competition where we let all the guests vote on the most decked-out station. The prize is basically bragging rights for the rest of the year, but it's also a great way to start holiday conversations with our clients.—*Kelly Bileddo, Sexy Hair International Master Artist and owner Salon Antebellum, St. Louis, MO*

✳ ON THE HOUSE

My favorite Colorboxx Salon tradition is finding a deserving client and gifting her the service at checkout. During the holidays we see how times can get tough for some of our guests—be it a single mom trying to make ends meet, or a client who just lost her job. As part of our holiday tradition, all the Colorboxx stylists get together and choose these deserving clients. They're always so shocked and appreciative when they find out there's no charge, and it gives everyone a warm holiday feeling. I'm so proud that my staff genuinely enjoys giving back. —*Nikki Friedhoffer, Scruples Ambassador, Colorboxx Salon, Savannah, GA*

✳ ALL DRESSED UP

I love the holidays. From Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve, I'm totally excited to celebrate with my salon family. For Thanksgiving I throw a potluck dinner at my house. Before we eat, each staff member tells everyone what he or she is grateful for that year. Then, for the entire month of December, I have a different holiday costume that I wear to the salon each day. Red suit covered in snowmen, reindeer and Christmas trees? Done. Nutcracker toy soldier costume complete with drum? Check. Elf outfit with curly hat and red and white striped socks? Been there. My staff follows suit with some of the ugliest Christmas sweaters you've ever seen. The whole holiday dress-up tradition makes everyone laugh, perks up clients and gives the salon a cheerful vibe.—*Steve Hightower, owner of Steve Hightower Hair Salon & Day Spa, a Repêchage salon, Atlanta, GA*