

## Budget-beating gifts

Liberty Staff

For many people the festive season feels more like a financial burden than an opportunity to celebrate with family and friends.

This year, think out of the box for gifts that reflect the true spirit of giving.

### Time is money

Time is one of the most valuable gifts you can give and it won't negatively affect your credit card.

- Instead of toys, buy the family a board game. Board games are great fun and give you an opportunity to spend some time together as a family.
- Make gift vouchers which allow friends and family to 'cash in' on your time. Give home-made vouchers for things like babysitting; a night off from cooking or doing the laundry; fetching kids from school or a home-pedicure or foot rub.
- Visit your parents or grandparents a week or two before Christmas. Help them by cleaning the house, working in the garden or doing odd jobs like painting and minor repairs.
- Make a collage of old family photos using scrapbooking themes. Be creative with paints, colours and decorations, and make your own frames. This is a great way to sort out old photos and keep those special memories alive.

### Share the load

One well-considered gift can be more valuable than a truck load.

- Write down each family member's name and throw the names in a hat. Each family member draws the name of the person that they will buy a gift for – at an affordable price agreed to by all!
- Or, get everyone in the family to make the gift. Choose a theme for example a bird feeder, photo frame, or stationery box. The gift must be made with objects from around the house. The most creative design, as voted by the family, wins a prize.
- Everyone in the family saves a certain amount of money throughout the year, which goes into a kitty. The money is used to throw a party at the end of the year and to buy one small gift for each person.

### Remember the meaning of Christmas

Instead of buying gifts for one another, choose a charity to support. Go out for the day and give food and company to those who are really in need.