



AFTER-SKATING PARTY

Christmas is for children, says Ellen McNamara as she places the last hand-made photo ornament on her family's tree. But this busy Ridgewood mother of three boys, who balances home and career with aplomb, will be the first to admit that there is a whole lot of inner child in her. "I love the holidays," she enthuses. "I just eat it up. The decorations, the food, the lights – it really calls to the artist in me." Wishing to evoke a special holiday ambiance for her family, McNamara enlisted the creative skills of Jennifer McGee, of Jennifer McGee Design Inc. in Ridgewood, to help decorate her kitchen and family room for the holidays.

"We spend a lot of time together as a family, especially around the holidays," notes McNamara. "Todd and I love to walk to town

thought in mind, McGee came up with a theme: The kitchen would be set for an "après skating" party. "Ellen's boys are so adorable," says McGee, "and I thought, let's do something that really calls to the children." Brightly colored scarves, mittens and sweaters take center stage. McGee and McNamara dressed the backs of the kitchen chairs with the sweaters, while scarves were used to hang simple green wreaths in the windows. The kitchen table was dressed head to toe like a "preppy candy land," says McGee – complete with snowman plates, mugs of piping hot chocolate topped with a candy cane, and a wooden toy car at each boy's place. And for that extra special touch of whimsy, McGee hung giant colorful balls of yarn from the ceiling. "My boys just loved looking up at these big bright balls that just seem to float in the sky," adds