If your community has a public access television channel or local radio, they’re always looking for good programming ideas. This is one more opportunity to get the word out about Reclaim Your Holidays (RYH). In fact, two trainers from Marshalltown gave us the idea after they successfully promoted RYH for several years. They read “The Gift of Nothing,” by Patrick McDonnell on the air and shared many tips from the RYH website.

Below are some RYH Talking Points to use with the media. Also, in an interview situation, be yourself, be positive, be calm, and be enthusiastic about Reclaim Your Holidays and your involvement with it.

- The Reclaim Your Holidays initiative, a program of the UNI Center for Energy & Environmental Education, aims to help Iowans create more meaningful holidays and, ultimately, reduce environmental impact. It provides ideas for reducing stress, controlling finances, entertaining with the environment in mind — and giving meaningful, greener gifts. Visual for TV: print out a few of your favorite handouts from RYH web site so the camera can zoom in on them for viewers to see the possibilities.

- Winter holidays have always been occasions for celebration. However, amid countless parties, family gatherings, shopping, baking and other tasks, stress can creep in and it may seem difficult to live according to our values. Reclaim Your Holidays helps Iowans live more abundantly in an environmentally friendly way by providing practical and inspiring information, as well as opportunities for dialogue and idea sharing. Visual: Print out an 8-1/2 x 11 copy of the RYH poster or show the online Pick 5 Quiz.

- Research shows that when our money is invested in experiences, the thrill stays with us longer than when our money is spent buying products. RYH’s gives ideas of possible gifts of experience, such as piano lessons and summer camp registrations. Visual: Print out a copy of the handout, Give Gifts of Experience to Satisfy Friends and Family

- RYH has two easy ways for anyone to help figure out what’s important to them – the Pick 5 Quiz and the 5-Minute Assessment Tool. Both are on the website and provide a quick way to see what priorities you have for holidays. Based on your answers, you can begin thinking about what you like about the holidays, what you don’t like, and what you might like to change.
(Provide examples from the items on the Pick 5 and/or Assessment tools if there is time.) Visual: Print copies of each of these and hold up for the camera.

- **Gifts** from your local farmer’s market, green gifts for energy saving/gardening, or homemade gifts are all good ways to directly connect with the recipient. ReclaimYourHolidays.org offers a wide variety of ideas for giving these types of gifts as well. For example, give a child the gift of time spent just with that child. Or give an adult friend the gift of a night at an Iowa bed & breakfast or a share in a community-supported agriculture business for local food next summer. These are gift ideas that help the giver enjoy giving something that the recipient can really use rather than “stuff” that ends up needing new batteries in a week or is thrown on the “not interested” pile soon after the New Year. Many more ideas are on handouts that can be printed from the web site. Visual: sample of RYH gift coupons, or something you’ve made for someone else, or a book, etc.

- **This year**, consider greening your home, your food, and your holiday parties to reflect your values. ReclaimYourHolidays.org has ideas for decorating with green in mind like using LED holiday lights, homemade ornaments, or entertaining to reduce food waste and incorporating Iowa-grown meal for celebrations. Or use the Local Harvest recipes on the web site for an Iowa grown meal. Visual: string of LED lights, handmade ornaments

- **If you’re thinking of reshaping your holidays**, making some changes -- you’re not alone. ReclaimYourHolidays.org offers many stories of Iowans who have made changes in their holidays. For example, a Mt. Pleasant mother “adopts” an animal each year for her children through the National Wildlife Federation and an Iowa City family spends the holidays at an Iowa state park to be on neutral ground for all family members. Many RYH participants describe using alternatives to wrapping paper such as newspaper comics, cloth bags, or child-decorated brown paper sacks. Visual: Gift inside a holiday cloth bag or child-decorated paper sack.

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