

Date: December 22, 2005  
Release: Home Gardening  
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### **A Down Home Christmas**

Slow down all those Christmas and New Year parties will wait. The most important thing is to make Christmas memorable for those little ones. However, decorating, cooking and spending time together are way more memorable than gifts. They grow up too quick. At present I am in the middle, between older children and no grandchildren. So, pardon me as I share my most memorable Christmas.

My little girl was supposed to be born eighteen years ago today, Christmas Day. However, she was born over two months pre-mature. I remember going as fast as my little Dodge Colt would go from Clemson to the only hospital in the area able to handle such a preemie, Greenville Memorial. Everyone crowding in front of the elevator scattered when I said my wife is having a baby, right now. It was not surprising when no one offered to ride the elevator with us to the delivery room. A few minutes later my little, just over 2 pound, Tyra Noel was born.

For over two months, we made that trip everyday to the hospital. Each day drew me closer to my little girl. Just before Christmas she came home. What a Christmas. All of our money was happily spent on the hospital stay, the presents were few, but the joy was great. Tyra I may not always show it, but I will always love you.

I don't know who first said it but they were right, "Home is where the heart is." This is why I love doing our TV show, Down Home with Tony and Amanda. Many times I think it is just another one of those jobs I don't get paid for, but then again we are showing folks what home is all about. Decorating, gardening and cooking are those little touches that truly make our homes, home. At present Down Home can be seen on digital cable and some satellite systems on the SC Channel (channel 802 on Time Warner Cable). Also, you can see it on the web at [www.mig.org](http://www.mig.org).

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