



# For Keeps

VOLUME SEVENTEEN | ISSUE FOUR | FALL 2018

GET EXCITED FOR  
ORNAMENT DEBUT  
OCTOBER 6-14

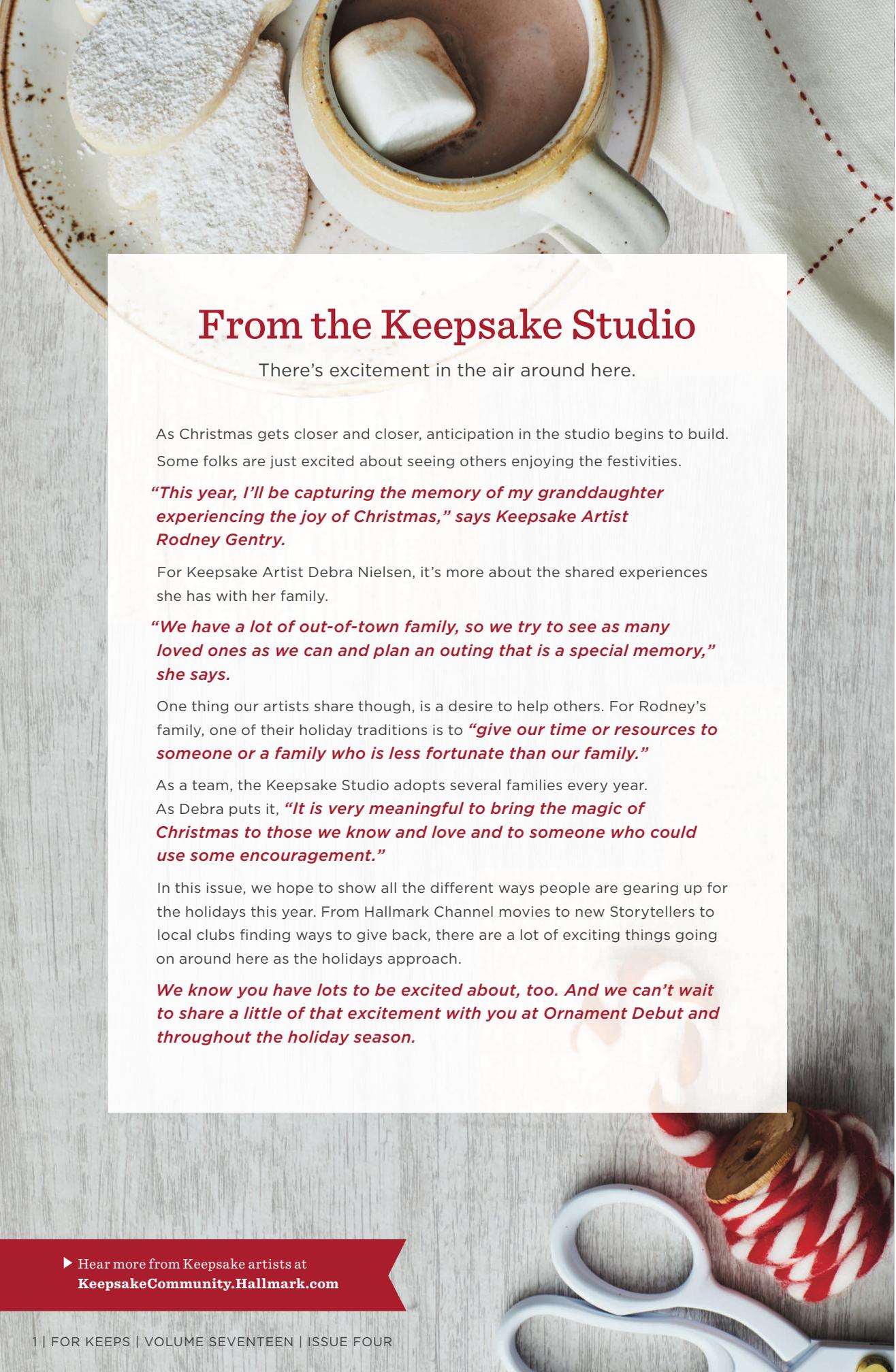
A TRIP TO  
POLAND

FROM YOUR TV  
TO YOUR TREE

LIGHTS, CAMERA,  
KEEPSAKE VIDEOS

  
KEEPSAKE

CELEBRATING THE  
**45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
OF HALLMARK KEEPSAKE ORNAMENTS

A top-down photograph of a white ceramic mug filled with dark brown hot chocolate. A single white marshmallow is melting on top of the drink. To the left of the mug, on a light-colored plate, are several round cookies, some of which are coated in white powdered sugar. The background is a light-colored wooden surface. In the bottom right corner, a pair of white-handled scissors and a spool of red and white striped ribbon are visible.

## From the Keepsake Studio

There's excitement in the air around here.

As Christmas gets closer and closer, anticipation in the studio begins to build. Some folks are just excited about seeing others enjoying the festivities.

***"This year, I'll be capturing the memory of my granddaughter experiencing the joy of Christmas," says Keepsake Artist Rodney Gentry.***

For Keepsake Artist Debra Nielsen, it's more about the shared experiences she has with her family.

***"We have a lot of out-of-town family, so we try to see as many loved ones as we can and plan an outing that is a special memory," she says.***

One thing our artists share though, is a desire to help others. For Rodney's family, one of their holiday traditions is to ***"give our time or resources to someone or a family who is less fortunate than our family."***

As a team, the Keepsake Studio adopts several families every year. As Debra puts it, ***"It is very meaningful to bring the magic of Christmas to those we know and love and to someone who could use some encouragement."***

In this issue, we hope to show all the different ways people are gearing up for the holidays this year. From Hallmark Channel movies to new Storytellers to local clubs finding ways to give back, there are a lot of exciting things going on around here as the holidays approach.

***We know you have lots to be excited about, too. And we can't wait to share a little of that excitement with you at Ornament Debut and throughout the holiday season.***

► Hear more from Keepsake artists at  
[KeepsakeCommunity.Hallmark.com](https://www.KeepsakeCommunity.Hallmark.com)

# Ornament Debut is almost here!

Join us in store or online October 6-14 for our second big event of the season! Find new releases, meet up with fellow KOC members and pick up your exclusive KOC ornament and button.



## A TOUCH OF THE TROPICS

Inspired by her Beauty of Birds series, Edythe Kegrize has designed something really special for KOC members to celebrate Ornament Debut this year.

"I chose the parrot because of his vivid colors," Edythe says. "This ornament is one that can be hung in any direction and actually has more color and a little bling in the form of crystals on the back side."

The Pretty Parrot is a club-exclusive ornament available at Ornament Debut. This design is also featured on our club-exclusive button available in stores during the event. Don't miss the Merriest House in Town button, too.



## A YEARLY SPECIAL IN YOUR HOME

When Tracy Larsen and Tim Bodendistel began working on the new *A Charlie Brown Christmas* Collection, it felt like they were visiting old friends, with both of them being lifelong fans of the classic Christmas show.

"For me, the Peanuts Christmas special is one of my holiday traditions and warmest memories," says Tim.

And now, you have a chance to relive that beloved special, too, no matter how many Storytellers you collect.

"If you just have two characters, they 'talk' to each other. As you add additional characters, their voices are added into the conversation so that you can receive a lot of interplay between all the characters," Tracy says.

Linus and Charlie Brown will be released at Ornament Debut, with three more being released before Christmas.

► Get an inside look at the magic at [Hallmark.com/PeanutsStorytellers](https://Hallmark.com/PeanutsStorytellers)



2019 sneak peek!



## A VERY COASTAL CHRISTMAS

Spread the festivities beyond the tree with this new, unofficial series of tabletop Christmas lighthouses featuring light and sound.

We're already cooking up a new lighthouse for next year, so this is the perfect time to start building your display and to add this charming gift to your holiday decorating.

## From your TV to your tree

Here's an inside look at how the Keepsake Studio and Hallmark Channel work together to create ornaments based on a popular movie series.

### ORDER UP!



Based on the actual diner featured in *Christmas in Evergreen*, the Chris Kringle Kitchen ornament adds a dash of Christmas flavor to the town of Evergreen and, maybe, to your tree.



A couple of movie extras walk in front of the Chris Kringle Kitchen, which is now a Keepsake Ornament!

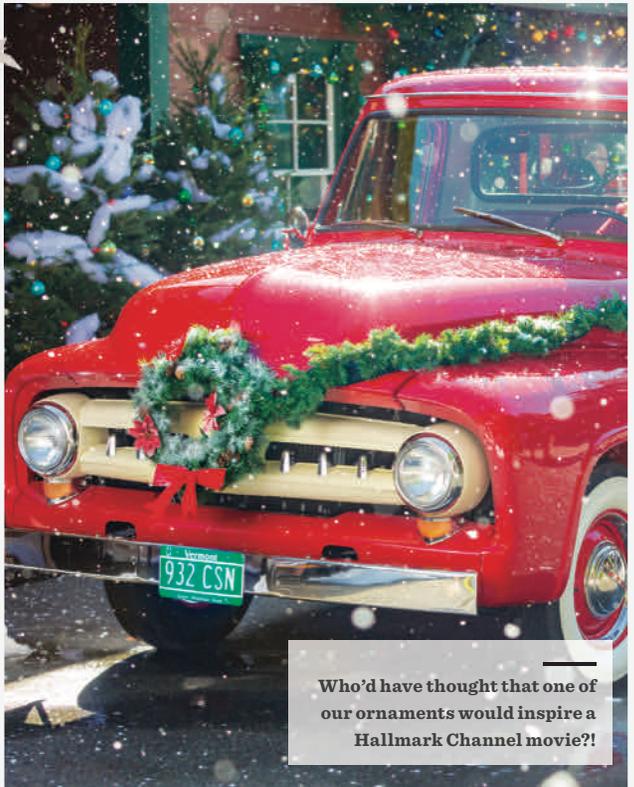
### BRINGING A CLASSIC TO THE SMALL SCREEN



When Keepsake Editor Mike Brush was tasked with getting the 1954 Mercury M-100 truck featured in *Christmas in Evergreen*, he never imagined how far the production team would go to make it happen. Not only did they get the truck into the movie, it became an integral part of the story!

Want to know a Hollywood secret? The truck featured in the movie is actually a 1955 Mercury M-100, with all the parts that distinguish it from the 1954 model disguised under garland and other Christmas trappings.

"They even added wood slats to the truck bed to more closely resemble the ornament!" says Mike.



Who'd have thought that one of our ornaments would inspire a Hallmark Channel movie?!

► See more about the movies at  
[HallmarkChannel.com](http://HallmarkChannel.com)

# Bringing you something special from across the ocean

To make sure the finished ornaments look as good as (or better than) the sketches, Keepsake team members travel to Poland to look at the work in progress.



The Keepsake team visited the beautiful ruins of Olsztyn Castle in southern Poland.

To create something truly special for next year's Heritage Ornament and premium Keepsake Ornament collections, Keepsake team members Jim Tronoski and Joanne Eschrich turned their attention to far-off Poland...and to blown-glass ornaments.

According to *The Polish American Journal*, ***“Polish glass ornaments have a very old tradition and a reputation for quality, design, artistic imagination, and craftsmanship.*** Mouth-blown and hand-

decorated, they are very delicate art treasures.” In other words, the perfect addition to your tree!

While in Poland, Jim and Joanne visited each showroom and reviewed each work in progress. For many of the ornaments, a Keepsake artist provides an original sculpt or detailed illustration.

***“Every blown-glass ornament is a true work of art, as each part of the creation is handcrafted.***

In some cases, the illustrations have been sculpted and the glass rods have been heated and blown by glass blowers into molds from our designs or free blown into beautiful shapes,” explains Jim.

“Each ornament is silvered and then handpainted with meticulous details. Finishing touches include glitter, gems and fabrics.”



One of Edythe Kegrize's three mini birds in the works.

As much as the trip is about checking on ornaments being worked on, it's also a learning experience for our artists.

“The work is a true partnership,” Jim says. “We have been working with each of the studios for the past three years to develop the Heritage blown-glass ornaments, and the relationship with each of them is amazing. ***We have beautiful designs, and they provide the translation into the glass material that creates our amazing Heritage line of ornaments.***”

Despite the travel (and jet lag), Jim and Joanne think that this special partnership will result in some truly special ornaments.

“We want the ornaments to convey that sense of beauty that only glass can create,” Jim says. “I feel that the glass studios we work with impart the heart and feeling of the original designs, and ***I want to make the connection of the great Keepsake talent that our club members love to these one-of-a-kind treasures.***”



Joanne Eschrich inspects her ornament as it makes its way through the painting process at GAS Studio in Poland.



## Telling the artist's story

See how Keepsake videos come to life behind the lens of Creative Video Strategist Joel Franklin.

For Joel Franklin, working on Keepsake videos feels a lot like coming home.

***“Every Christmas Eve when I was a kid, we’d go buy a Keepsake Ornament,” he says. “So it’s surreal to now be a part of this community with the artists.”***

To make a Keepsake video—of which Joel has shot over 100 in his year and a half at Hallmark—he always starts with the artist. He sits down with the creator of the ornament and tries to get all the details of its creation: Where did the idea come from? What is the ornament made of? What drew the artist to that specific ornament? And to Joel’s surprise, no artist works on an ornament just because they were told to do it; each one has its own significance to the artist.

Ever wonder why a beer stein has a metal lid on it? Or why there are illustrations around the traditional steins? These are just some of the insights Joel learns about when interviewing Keepsake artists.

***“Every single thing in life has a story,” Joel says. “My job is to find that story and showcase it and the artistry that created it.”***



Keepsake Artist Ken Crow looks out over the train tracks that pass by Hallmark headquarters.



Tracy Larsen gets ready to be filmed for a special Keepsake video.



Edythe Kegrize takes in all the colors and patterns that make up a butterfly's wings.

Once Joel finds the story, he starts planning where to shoot the artist. He tends to focus on a place that makes them the most comfortable.

"These are artists, not actors," he says. "Some are a little more introverted than others, and so I always want to make them feel as at ease as possible to get their story out of them." For some shoots, this means tracking down the farm where the artist

first discovered their creative spark. For others, it means a visit to the butterfly festival at the local botanical garden.

But no matter which ornament he is shooting or where he is traveling to interview the artist, in the end it's all about story: "A video of an ornament hanging on the tree is OK, but it's so much more impactful to learn about the artist and where the inspiration for the ornament came from," he says.

***"Because that's what makes the ornament so special...it makes it more than just a 'thing you put on a tree.'"***

We hope that by watching our videos, you too will experience the magic that goes into each and every one of our ornaments.

See Joel's videos on [Hallmark.com](http://Hallmark.com) and on [Keepsake Community](#)

## A little peek at 2019 club ornaments



### A TRIP TO THE BALLET

For her new limited-series ornament collection, Edythe Kegrize delved into her memories watching the ballet. "I went to this ballet several times as a child and loved the colorful, elaborate costumes and creative set designs. I still enjoy the music each Christmas," Edythe recalls. Each ornament in her new Nutcracker Sweet series will feature a character from the famous ballet. Edythe describes them as "sweet, simple forms and inspired by clothespin dolls and simple wooden ornaments from Germany. The colorful costumes will have fabric, crystals and other attachments for a more handcrafted quality."



### WE ALL SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM

For the next ornament in her Christmas Window series (17th), Tammy Haddix didn't have to look far for inspiration. "My window ornaments are always inspired by my boys and the things they like," Tammy says. And the watchful observer just might recognize an old friend on next year's ornament. "Since my pet shop window ornament, I've always included a little spaniel dog. And I've always wanted to create the scene of a boy getting a small ice cream cone for the dog! This sweet dog is his best friend, just like my Baxter, our labradoodle, is for my boys." Tammy hopes next year's window brings back fond memories of the ice cream shops of yesteryear. "I sure know I was craving ice cream as I sculpted it!"

# Clubs built on caring

These local clubs show that their groups are so much more than simply collectors.



The Keepsake Keepers are one big, happy family in this group photo.



The Capital Collectors are all smiles in front of their donations for a local toy drive.

## THE KEEPSAKE KEEPERS Olathe, Kansas

There's plenty of caring to go around in the 71-member Keepsake Keepers club. Along with supporting Harvesters and the Johnson County Christmas Bureau (offering assistance to low-income families), they are actively involved with their local Ronald McDonald houses, collecting toys, soda tabs and other donations throughout the year for families affected by cancer. Aside from their philanthropy, club president Margo Brashears enjoys the "camaraderie of other collectors, sharing treasures and plain having fun!"

## THE CAPITAL COLLECTORS Charleston, West Virginia

With 53 members, the Capital Collectors participate in a variety of community service projects and organizations.

"We time our fundraising in conjunction with Hallmark Keepsake dates of interest, such as Premiere, Debut, etc.," says Jimmy Dowden, president of the club.

Capital Collectors members have participated in animal shelter events, helped collect books after a flood damaged their local library and collected toys for local organizations.



Some members of the Tis The Season For Making Memories Ornament Club with one of their fundraising raffle baskets.

## TIS THE SEASON FOR MAKING MEMORIES ORNAMENT CLUB Akron, Ohio

This Ohio-based club helps raise money and create care packages for many different organizations and causes, including Relay for Life, the local women's shelter and Akron Snow Angels (benefitting the homeless population). And for the past nine years, the club has donated ornaments and other items to decorate the 7-foot tree that fills Akron Children's Hospital with Christmas cheer.

"I enjoy seeing the thankfulness on the faces from the organizations we helped out," says Marci Goss, club president. "And also the great club members who help make these projects happen. What more could a president have in her life!"

## Save the date

**OCT 8** | Convention-exclusive ornaments available to KOC members (online only)

**NOV 30-DEC 2** | Gift of Memories Weekend Event

**JANUARY 2019** | KOC membership enrollment opens