

Dishing out holiday assists

Local duo give Christmas rookies a hand

By ERIKA HOBART
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Donning matching red sweaters, Heather Nelson and Kristi Bennitt show up at your door. They greet you with warm smiles, then take over your home for the holidays. Their subject this evening: Kirkland resident Kris Piersceniak. Entering his living room, the duo begin unpacking their numerous bags.

"Where do you want the tree?" Nelson asks Piersceniak.

He looks bewildered.

"I hadn't even thought about that," he says, gazing at an apartment space already filled with furniture. "I guess you can move stuff around."

The last few weeks have been hectic for Piersceniak. He's relocated from the main Microsoft campus into another office. He recently switched apartment buildings. He's hosting a holiday party for some friends and co-workers this weekend. And his family just made last-minute plans to fly up from California to visit. The whirlwind of changes overwhelmed Piersceniak, until he came across a Web site for Holiday Assistants, which promised to provide a "stress-free holiday



Kris Piersceniak watches as Kristi Bennitt of Holiday Assistants decorates a Christmas tree in Piersceniak's living room Dec. 18. Piersceniak's family was staying at his house for Christmas, so he called Bennitt and her partner Heather Nelson for help.

Katherine Ganter/Reporter Newspapers

solution."

"I usually panic and get things done at the last minute," Piersceniak admits. "If it wasn't for the last minute, nothing would ever get done. But I've

had so much other stuff going on this year... luckily, I found what sounded like a solution to all my problems."

Meet Nelson and Bennitt, the miracle workers behind

Holiday Assistants, a Kirkland-based business that provides services like holiday gift-buying and decorating for people with busy schedules. The goal is to make the holidays less

hectic and more enjoyable for everyone involved.

"There are some people who start thinking about the

