

The Alderman Newsflash

December 2016



The Alderman Collection of Memorable Christmases

Marlene Coats

Even though I had a very small family, we had many wonderful Christmas traditions. After I was married, it was my husband and I, my sister, mother, and of course, my dogs that made up our Christmas. We spent only one Christmas alone down here, because my family hadn't moved down yet. After that year, we were always together. We would go to church Christmas Eve, and on Christmas day would open gifts and enjoy a big turkey dinner! When we were kids, we would get a lot of Santy gifts - lots of different little things Everything was always welcome! We loved whatever we got. One thing was always a lottery ticket, and no, we would never win more than a few dollars. It was just a fun thing to do. We would get other things like pot holders with Christmas trees, or maybe a tiny sample of perfume, which was my favorite thing as a girl. Sometimes we might get a couple of big gifts like a long nightgown or a dressy house coat. We would also make fudge with pecans and exchange cookies with all our neighbors. Christmas was always an adventure!

Welch and Virginia Whitesell

We both grew up in Florida, and began dating at the age of 13 in the 8th grade. I went to college for accounting in Minneapolis, Minnesota while she worked as a telephone operator. Then Uncle Sam called me away to the military, which also saved my life financially. We had two small children at the time, and didn't have a warm coat between the four of us! We have now been married 69 years, but together for 74 years. I practiced law for six years in Englewood, Florida, and our first Christmas there we had very little furniture. With our food stamps, Virginia went Christmas shopping. Somehow, she managed to get a big school globe for the oldest son, who was about 11 or 12 at the time. As you can imagine, he didn't seem too happy when he saw what his gift was! We laugh about it now, how food stamps bought his Christmas presents that year. The kids used it for many years-but getting something for school as a Christmas present sure didn't impress him!



Ruth Young

Growing up Jewish, we celebrated Hanukkah (and I still do proudly of course!) and our parents were very good to us. Like when we were little, on Christmas day, even though we were Jewish, we would get a really good gift! One year I got a red spinning wheel, which was all the rage back then. We would also hang stockings, but that was it. We mostly stayed with the tradition of the menorah. We lived in a Jewish/Catholic neighborhood, so I saw (and celebrated) everything in December! I always loved that feeling in the air of brotherhood and sisterhood Hanukkah/Christmas ushered in. Being an American growing up with a lot of Christians, you felt that spirit. With some of my non-Jewish friends I would be invited to come celebrate Christmas with them, and I would go! It was considered an honor. We had a Portuguese woman who took care of us, and when she decorated her tree we would go help. I always liked the Christmas lights, I find them enchanting! I knew when I was young Santa wasn't real, but I still loved the Hallmark channel Christmas specials with Santa Clause.

So it was a joyous time, and I feel it being here at Alderman Oaks; I love the diversity. I love the Christmas décor here! I feel part of a family - even with the different beliefs and celebration traditions.

Donna Coulombe

I grew up in Massachusetts where the winters were freezing! I had three older brothers who I looked up to and adored, which made me a bit of a tomboy. When I was 10 years old, all I wanted was a hockey stick. I didn't want any dolls, dresses, or girly stuff; just that hockey stick. All my brothers and their friends played hockey in the winter, and I was big enough to finally play with them. There was this really big playground across from my house. Every year, my father would open up the hose and let water pool up around the area overnight so that in the morning, the water would be transformed into a beautiful sheet of ice. My brothers and friends would use this as their hockey arena. Well that year Santa Clause really delivered! I got my beautiful hockey stick and was able to keep up with my brothers. I had barely unwrapped my stick before I was putting on my coat and shouting for the boys to hurry up so we could all go play! As far as favorite gifts and Christmases go, this would have to be the most memorable.

THANK YOU to the four residents and staff member who shared their stories! If you have a story you would like to share, let Activity Director, Denise Leonhard, know!

January Birthdays

Margaret Adair - Jan 1

Chris Howlett - Jan 3

Pat Barrick - Jan 4

Welch Whitesell - Jan 6

Alan Geyer - Jan 23

Fred Green - Jan 24

Staff Members

Breann Chilson - Jan 5

Juanita Ponce - Jan 8

David Veverka - Jan 11

Samuel Curtis - Jan 21

Elder Ruiz-Reyes - Jan 22

Breanna Belcher - Jan 31



Like what you see? Come in for a visit!