

KIDS MAKE THE HOLIDAYS SPECIAL

By Judy Fritschen

All of the most special holiday memories I have include young children. Their perspectives have the most meaning by bringing us into their worlds of what the holidays mean to them. Let me give you some examples.

My husband, our daughter, and I spent one Christmas with Bill's sister and family. Our daughter was five years old at the time. There were four young girls at the gathering so you can imagine the excitement as Christmas Day approached. We let the kids stay up later than they normally would have on Christmas Eve. There came a knock on the door and there stood Santa Clause holding a big bag of presents. Of course this was a neighbor dressed in a Santa suit. Bill's sister and husband had arranged for a neighbor friend to make this Santa visit and he looked very authentic. When our daughter went back to school after we returned home, her friends were discussing whether or not Santa Clause was real or if their parents bought all the presents and just told them Santa brought them. Our daughter told her friends she knew Santa was real because on Christmas Eve she and her cousins had stayed up too late and Santa came while they were still up. That experience was absolutely real to her.

It was Thanksgiving Day. Our family was going to Bill's parents' home for Thanksgiving Day. Our daughter was about seven years old at the time. As we were traveling along she asked, "On our way to Grandma's will we go over a river?" I answered, "We will go over a small creek and it does have water running in it. I guess you could say we will go over a small river." A little later she asked, "Will we go through a woods?" I answered, "We will go through a wooded area. I guess you could say we will go through a small woods." About that time I remembered the words to a popular holiday song, "Over the river and through the woods to Grandmother's house we go....." Apparently that is what our daughter was thinking about.

I remember traveling between Denver and Colorado Springs one Fall day with our now grown daughter and family. Our granddaughter was about five years old at the time. As we drove along the highway a long train was traveling parallel to us. It was carrying carload after carload of coal. We adults were discussing where it came from with all that coal and where it might be going. I noticed our granddaughter had a very serious look on her face as we carried on this conversation. Finally, she commented, "A lot of children are bad."