

Nuggets of Fun and Nostalgia for Treasure Valley Golden-Agers

A Christmas Coat for Bobby



I remember my first Christmas adventure with Grandma. I was just a kid. I remember tearing across town on my bike to visit her on the day my big sister dropped the bomb: "There is no Santa Claus," she jeered. "Even dummies know that!"

My Grandma was not the gushy kind, never had been. I fled to her that day because I knew she would be straight with me.

Grandma was home, and she gave me one of her famous cinnamon rolls still warm from the oven. Between bites, I told her everything. She was ready for me.

"No Santa Claus?" She exclaimed... "Well, I guess it's time you learned!! Now, put on your coat, and let's go."

"Go? Go where, Grandma?" I asked. I hadn't even finished my second world-famous cinnamon roll.

"Where" turned out to be Kerby's General Store, the one store in town that had a little bit of just about everything. As we walked through its doors, Grandma handed me five dollars. That was a bundle in those days.

"Take this money," she said, "and buy something for someone who needs it. I'll wait for you in the car." Then she turned and walked out of Kerby's.

I was only eight years old. I'd often gone shopping with my mother, but I had never shopped for anything all by myself.

The store seemed big and crowded, full of people scrambling to finish their Christmas shopping. For a few moments I just stood there, confused, clutching that five-dollar bill, wondering what to buy, and who on earth to buy it for. I thought of everybody I knew: my family, my friends, my neighbors, the kids at school, and the people who went to my church.

I was just about thought out, when I suddenly thought of Bobby Decker. He was a kid with bad breath and messy hair, and he sat right behind me in Mrs. Pollock's fourth-grade class.

(Continued on page 2)

The Little Christmas Carollers

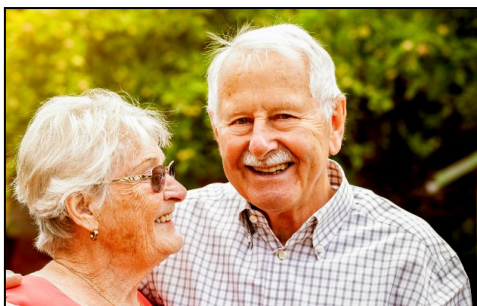


We are a band of carollers,
We march through frost
and snow,
But care not for the weather
As on our way we go.

At every hall or cottage
That stands upon our way,
We stop to give the people
Best wishes for the day.

We pray a merry Christmas,
Made bright by
Christmas cheer,
With peace, and hope,
and gladness
And all they may hold dear.

And for all those that happen
To pass us on our way
We have a smile,
and wish them
A merry Christmas day.



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Free Haircut



One day a florist went to a barber for a haircut. After the haircut he went to pay his bill, but the barber replied,

"I can't accept money from you, I'm doing community service this week."

The florist was pleased and left.

When the barber went to open his shop the next morning, there was a "thank you" card and a dozen roses waiting for him at his door.

Later, a policeman came in for a haircut, and when he tried to pay his bill, the barber again replied, "I can't accept money from you, I'm doing community service this week."

The cop was happy and left.

The next morning when the barber went to open up, there was a "thank you" card and a dozen donuts waiting for him at his door.

Then a Congressman came in for a haircut, and when he went to pay his bill, the barber again replied, "I can't accept money from you. I'm doing community service this week."

The Congressman was very happy and left the barber shop.

The next morning when the barber went to open up, there were a dozen Congressmen lined up waiting for a free haircut.

(A Christmas Coat for Bobby—Continued from page 1)

Bobby Decker didn't have a coat. I knew that because he never went out to recess during the winter. His mother always wrote a note, telling the teacher that he had a cough, but all we kids knew that Bobby Decker didn't have a cough; he just didn't have a good coat. I fingered the five-dollar bill with growing excitement. I would buy Bobby Decker a coat!

I settled on a red corduroy one that had a hood to it. It looked real warm, and he would like that.

"Is this a Christmas present for someone?" the lady behind the counter asked kindly, as I laid my five dollars down.

"Yes, ma'am," I replied shyly. "It's for my friend Bobby."

The nice lady smiled at me, as I told her about how Bobby really needed a good winter coat. I didn't get any change, but she put the coat in a bag, smiled again, and wished me a Merry Christmas.

That evening, as Grandma helped me wrap the coat in Christmas paper, a little tag fell out of the coat, and Grandma tucked it in her Bible. Grandma wrote, "To Bobby, From Santa Claus" on a tag and taped it to the package. Then she drove me over to Bobby Decker's house, explaining as we went that I was about to see "Santa" in action.

Grandma parked down the street from Bobby's house, and she and I crept noiselessly and hid in the bushes by his front walk.

Then Grandma gave me a nudge. "All right, Santa Claus," she whispered, "get going."

"Santa Claus? Me?" I thought.

I took a deep breath, dashed for his front door, threw the present down on his step, pounded his door and flew back to the safety of the bushes.

Together we waited breathlessly in the darkness for the front door to open. Finally it did, and there stood Bobby. He looked around in surprise, then excitedly ran inside with the package.

That very night, Grandma helped me realize that "Santa Claus" was a symbol of the Christmas spirit – which was alive and well in the hearts all gift givers – both young and old.

Fifty years haven't dimmed the thrill of those moments spent shivering beside my Grandma in Bobby Decker's bushes.

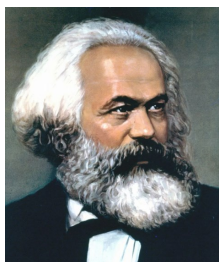
I still have Grandma's Bible, with the price tag from Bobby's coat tucked inside it - \$19.95.

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Most people have heard of Karl Marx, but few know of his sister, Onya, a former Olympic runner. Her name is still mentioned at the start of each race.



The ABCs of Christmas



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A is for ANGELS

With robes so bright
Whose carols were heard
On that first Christmas Night.

B is for BABY

The Christ Child so dear.
We celebrate His birthday
On Christmas each year.

C is for CANDLES

That so brightly shine
To give a warm welcome
To your friends and mine.

D is for DOORWAYS

With garlands of green
To make Christmas merry
As far as they're seen.

E is for EVERGREENS

A Christmas decor
We see at the windows
And hung on the door.

F is for FUN

The whole season long,
From trimming the tree
To singing a song.

G is for GREETINGS

A merry "Hello"
With a heart full of love
For people we know.

H is for HOLLY

With berries so red
To make into wreaths
To hang overhead.

I is for ICE

On snow covered hills
Where sledding is fun
Along with the spills.

J is for JINGLE BELLS

Merrily ringing.
To the whole wide world
Joy they are bringing.

K is for KRIS KRINGLE

So happy he stands.
He's also called Santa
In some other lands.

L is for LANTERNS.

I'm sure that their light
Helped Mary and Joseph
That first Christmas night.

M is for MARY,

Her heart full of love
For her Son, little Jesus,
Who came from above.

N is for NOEL

The angels did sing
To herald the birth
Of Jesus, the King.

O is for ORNAMENTS

So shiny and bright.
With lights on the tree
They sparkle at night.

P is for PACKAGES

Presents so gay
All 'round the tree
For our Christmas day.

Q is for QUIET

Christmas Eve night
With snow covered hills
Glistening so bright.

R is for RED

A color so gay,
Makes things look bright
For that one "special" day.

S is for SHEPHERDS

Who first saw the star
Over Bethlehem's manger
And followed it far.

T is for TREES

We decorate so gay.
They wait for old Santa
To hurry their way.

U is for UNIVERSE

All countries and places
Where the spirit of Christmas
Shows on bright, happy faces.

V is for VIXEN

That lively reindeer
Who always helps Santa
Deliver the toys each year.

W is for WISE MEN

Who brought gifts so rare
And fell down and worshipped
The Christ child so fair.

X goes with O

And expresses much better
The kisses and hugs
In our Christmas letter.

Y is for YULE LOGS

Whose bright sparks fly high
And give a warm welcome
To friends passing by.

Z is the last of the letters and yet

It's they only one in the alphabet
That doesn't stand for something you see
And usually found on the Christmas tree.
But as Santa said as he
ZOOMED out of sight,
"Merry Christmas to all
and to all a good night."



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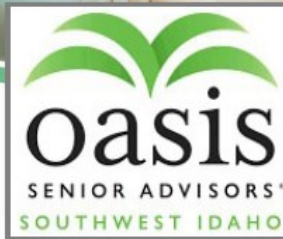
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Don't Worry What Others Think!

I was about eleven years old when my grandma told me something I've never forgotten.



It was a regular school day, and like always, I walked the mile from school through town to my grandparents' farmhouse. Usually, I was a happy kid. But that day, something felt off. I was quiet when I walked in the door — and Grandma noticed right away.

Without saying a word, she guided me into the kitchen, made me a cup of hot chocolate, and set out some cookies. She didn't press me to talk — she just waited.

Halfway through my drink, I finally spoke. "I thought this girl at school liked me," I said. "But today she said something mean. I don't think anyone at school likes me."

Grandma didn't rush to respond. She sipped her coffee, like she always did when she was thinking. Then she looked at me gently and said:

"Totty," — she always called me Totty instead of Kathy — "Totty, a few people in life will really like you. Some might not like you at all. But most people? They just won't think much about you either way. They might say hi, notice your shoes or your smile, but once you're out of sight, they'll go back to their own lives."

Even at eleven, that made sense to me. She was saying: Don't let one person's bad mood convince you that you're unlovable. Most people are too wrapped up in their own world to think deeply about you — good or bad.

She went on: "If someone walks by and doesn't say hello, it probably isn't personal. Maybe they're distracted or worried about something. And if someone is rude and you haven't done anything wrong, chances are they're having a bad day. It's not about you."

That moment stuck with me. And even now, when I feel left out, or hurt by someone's words or silence, I come back to what Grandma taught me.

If I didn't do anything wrong, then it probably has more to do with them than me. And that little bit of wisdom has helped me feel okay — even on the hard days.

Outsmarting the Teacher

The teacher was practicing numbers with the class and said to little Jimmy, "Jimmy, what age were you on your last Birthday?"

Jimmy replied, "I was six, ma'am!"

The teacher continued, "So what age will you be on your next Birthday?"

Jimmy hesitated then replied, "I will be eight!"

The teacher smiled and said, "That's not correct Jimmy. If you were six on your last birthday, then you can't be eight on your next birthday."

Jimmy smiled and replied, "Really, I will be eight on my next birthday!"

The teacher said, "Well, Jimmy, how do you figure that?"

Jimmy replied, "Because today is my birthday!"



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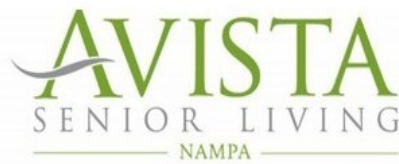


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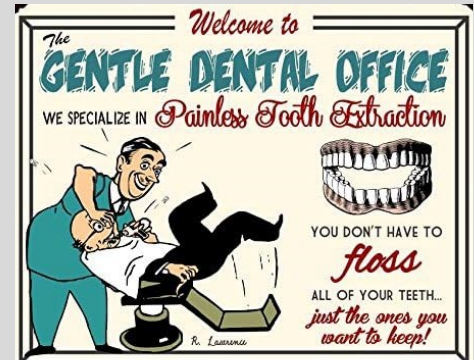
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Famous Last Words

"Are you sure the power is off?"
"Don't be so superstitious."
"He's probably just hibernating."
"I can do that with my eyes closed."
"I can make this light before it changes."
"I wonder where the mother bear is?"
"I'll get a world record for this."
"I'll hold it and you light the fuse."
"I'm making a citizen's arrest."
"It's fireproof."
"It's probably just a rash."
"It's strong enough to hold both of us."
"I've done this before."
"I've seen this done on TV."
"Just take whatever you want, this is a ghost town."
"Let it down slowly."
"Nice doggie."
"Now watch this..."
"Pull the pin and count to what?"
"Rat poison only kills rats."
"It won't hurt to try it once."
"That's odd."
"The odds of that happening have to be a million to one!"
"These are the good kind of mushrooms."
"This doesn't taste right."
"Well, we've made it this far."
"What does this button do?"
"What do you think this is?"
"Which wire was I supposed to cut?"
"You wouldn't hit a guy with glasses on, would you?"



An old farmer asked the dentist the cost for a tooth extraction.

"\$85 for an extraction, sir," the dentist replied.

"\$85?!!! Haven't ya got nothin' cheaper?" the old guy exclaimed.

"That's the normal charge," said the dentist.

"What about if ya didn't use any anesthetic?"

"That's unusual, sir, but I could do it and knock off \$15."

"What about if ya used one of your dentist trainees, and no anesthetic?"

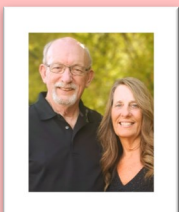
"I can't guarantee their professionalism, and it'll be painful. But the price could drop to \$40."

"How about if ya make it a trainin' session, with the other students watchin' and learnin'?"

"It'll be good for the students..." mull'd the dentist. "Tell you what. I'll charge you \$20. But it will be traumatic and painful."

"Now yer talkin'! It's a deal," said the old farmer. "Can you make an appointment for the wife next Tuesday then?"

Have a Blessed and Merry Christmas!



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The New Wal-Mart Greeter

Young people forget that we old people had a career before we retired.....

Frank, a new retiree-greeter at Wal-Mart, just couldn't seem to get to work on time. Every day he was 5, 10, 15 minutes late. But he was a good worker, really tidy, clean-shaven, sharp-minded and a real credit to the company and obviously demonstrating their "Older Person Friendly" policies.



One day the boss called him into the office for a talk.

"Frank, I have to tell you, I like your work ethic, you do a bang-up job when you finally get here; but your being late so often is quite bothersome."

"Yes, I know boss and I am sorry and am working on it."

"Well good, you are a team player. That's what I like to hear."

"Yes sir, I understand your concern and I will try harder."

Seeming puzzled, the manager went on to comment, "I know you're retired from the Armed Forces. What did they say to you there if you showed up in the morning late so often?"

The old man looked down at the floor, then smiled. He chuckled quietly, then said with a grin, "They usually saluted and said, Good morning, Admiral, can I get your coffee, sir?"

Milestones

Rudy & Faye Desaro

Parma
Nov 21, 1965
60 years



Helen Strine
Caldwell Grace
Dec 3, 1934
91 years



Rare Photo of a Remote Control From the 1970s



The senior adult version of "head and shoulders, knees and toes" is "wallet, glasses, keys and phone!"

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We weren't raised with tons of options.
We ate what was put on our plate.
We wore what our parents could afford.
We did whatever chores we were told to do. That's how we learned to be grateful.

Clear Reflection

John and his ole lady lived deep in the hills and seldom saw many people, never went to town.

One day a peddler came by to sell his goods and asked John if he or his ole lady wanted to buy something.

"Well, she ain't home, she's gone down to the creek to wash clothes, but lemme see what you got," said John.

The peddler showed him pots and pans, tools and gadgets, but John wasn't interested.

Then He spotted a mirror and said, "What's that?"

Before the peddler could tell him it was a mirror, John picked it up and said, "My goodness, how'd you get a picture of my pappy?"



John was so happy, he traded his wife's best pitcher for it. The peddler left before she came back.

John was worried that she would be mad at him for trading her best pitcher, so he hid it in the shop behind some boxes of junk.

He would go out to the barn two or three times a day to look at the "picture" and eventually she got suspicious.

One day she got fed up and after he retired for the night, she went out to the barn. When she found the mirror behind the boxes, she picked it up and said, "So this is the old hag he's been foolin' around with!"

Passing the Test

Howard Billings had been out of work for a while when he spotted a job ad in the local paper: "Electrical Engineer Needed." Though he didn't have a formal education, he figured, "Why not give it a shot?" So, with his best shirt on and a résumé that boasted nothing but sheer determination, he marched over to the power company and hand-delivered his application.

Mr. Davis, the boss, looked over Billings's résumé and raised an eyebrow. "You're brave for applying," he said, suppressing a smirk. "But here's the deal—we've got a policy. You've gotta pass a 10-question test to be considered."

"Fine by me," Billings said confidently, even though his palms were sweating like a cold can of Coke in July.

That morning, there were two candidates: Fred, a certified electrical engineer with degrees, certificates, and enough credentials to wallpaper a room; and, of course, Billings, armed with grit and a pencil.

Both men sat down in a quiet room to take the test, the tension so thick you could cut it with a knife.

After finishing, they handed their papers to Mr. Davis and waited outside while he reviewed them.

Ten minutes later, Mr. Davis called them back into his office. "Gentlemen," he began, clapping his hands together, "thank you both for taking the test. But we've made our decision, and the position will go to Fred."

Billings frowned, scratching his head under his worn-out Saints cap. "Hold on, Mr. Davis. Can I ask somethin'? What did Fred score on that test?"

"You both scored 9 out of 10," Davis replied, clearly trying to maintain his professional demeanor.

Billings' frown deepened. "Well, if we both missed just one question, why you gonna hire him and not me?"

Mr. Davis leaned back in his chair, folding his arms. "It's not just about the score, Billings. It's about how you answered. On question #7, Fred wrote, 'I don't know.'"

"And me?" Billings asked, his voice tinged with curiosity.

Davis chuckled, shaking his head. "You wrote, 'Me neither.'"



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The Sunday school teacher had his class all stand.

"Do you want to go to heaven?" he asked little Billy.

"Yes, I do," Billy replied.

"Then go stand by that wall."

Then he asked Katy, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

"Yes, I do," she answered.

"Then go stand by that wall."

After asking several more kids, who



now stood by the wall, the teacher got to little Sammy.

"Sammy, do you want to go to heaven?"

"No, I sure don't!" he exclaimed.

The teacher was shocked and said, "You mean to tell me you don't want to go to heaven when you die?"

"Oh, when I die, sure," replied Sammy. "I thought you meant right now!"

Milestones



Mary Bayne Ouimette

Dec 1, 1923—102 years
Nampa Grace



Lucy Henzler

Dec 27, 1927—98 years
Nampa Senior Center



Don Gibbons

Dec 24, 1929—96 years
Caldwell Senior Center



Sybil Hinatsu

Dec 13, 1932—93 years
Parma Senior Center



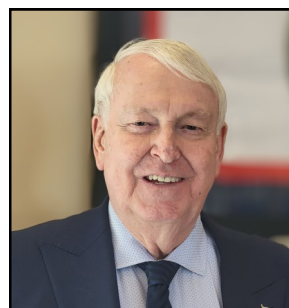
Ray Ax

Dec 18, 1935—90 years
Caldwell Senior Center



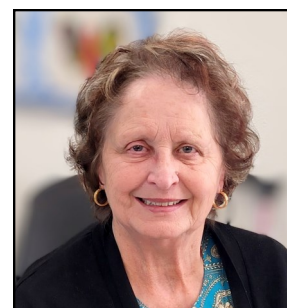
John Miller

Dec 11, 1940—85 years
Nampa Senior Center



Seth Nettleton

Dec 5, 1945—80 years
Nampa



Linda Kirk

Dec 13, 1945—80 years
Nampa Senior Center



Faye Roundtree

Dec 13, 1945—80 years
Melba Valley Senior Center

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