

Christmas Season Always A Favorite For Columnist

by Derrick Richardson
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Since I was a kid, Christmas has been my favorite holidays. I have many fond memories of Christmas as a kid. I enjoyed everything that came on TV related to Christmas. I couldn't wait to watch all the Christmas cartoons, movies, shows, and commercials advertising all the cool toys that I would add to my Christmas list hoping to find under the tree. Christmas break was the best times ever because I could stay up pass my bedtime, wake on my own without my mother yelling at me to get up and get ready for school, and play with my friends all day for the next two weeks.

Growing up, our family always had a Christmas day tradition. On Christmas morning, my brother and I would automatically wake up early to open presents and play with the toys that Santa had brought us, however our mother would say it was too early to be awake and make us stay in bed for a little while longer. This was torcher because we could see the gifts under the tree in the living room from our bedroom. My brother and I would begin the morning playing with our toys for hours in our pajamas with the TV on in the background airing Christmas Specials until mom made us take a break to eat breakfast. After breakfast, I would call my friends and cousins to find out what they got

for Christmas. We would spend the afternoon and the evening with my aunts, uncles, and cousins over at my grandmother's house. We would pack up the car with our toys, (mom would only let us take a few), gifts for others, and food for the Christmas family meal. While outside loading the car, I would see the neighbors loading up their cars with similar plans. The day after Christmas was my day to go over to my friends or cousins house to play with their toys and share mine. Most of our parents had to go back to work before Christmas break ended, therefore we could play nonstop uninterrupted the entire time while our parents were at work.

I was born and raised in St. Louis, and the downtown department stores and businesses had Christmas displays and lights that were a site to see. I enjoyed going Christmas shopping with our mom to the department stores because the stores would be all decorated and set up for the holiday, to include Santa Clause, wrapping booths, layaway counters, gift return counters, Christmas sale banners, employees dressed in Christmas colors, and the smell of fresh roasted and baked items that were made in the store. Oh...and getting our picture taken with Santa.

Naturally, for the kids, the best part of Christmas is getting presents, but as you get older, you don't reflect so much on the toys, as much as you reflect on the memories of the good times, the traditions, and the joy of celebrating Christmas with friends and family.

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