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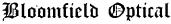


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MEMORIES

We asked our readers to recount their fondest memories of Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year's —those special memories that brighten these special nolidays.

Writers whose special moments are published here will receive a snappy O&E nylon briefcase.

Below is a sampling of our readers' warmest reflections of the holiday

HAVE a very special appreciation for holiday decorations in our home. It goes back to when I was very young. First grade to be specific.

The day before Thunksgiving, I was rushed to the hospital. I had been ill with your traditional childhood.

mumps and meastes for a couple of weeks urior, but suddenly I fell very ill and the doctors could not identify the problem.

Thanksgiving was a very trying day for my parents. As for me, I was most upset with the fact the hospital was not serving pumpkin pie. I had no iden how sick I was. It was all rather exciting for me at first.

The first night, my mother stayed with me. On the second night, she had to tend to the other five children man to tend to the done the children in my family. It was a hair-raising experience, all alone and watching Mr. McGoo's Christmus Carol for the first time. Morning could not come soon enough. I was terrified and I wanted out! Pumpkin pie became the least of my concerns.

I spent the better part of December as a human pin cushion. The doctors were able to identify a rare blood disorder, but I would have to spend more time in the hospital. Christmas was coming and my new fear was that

was coming and my new tear was that Santa might not find ine. Christmas was not too far away. A week before Christmas, the doctor told my parents I could go home, but I would have to be closely monitored. It did not matter to me. I was going home!

As my parents carried me into the house that cold December day, I will never forget the glow that came over me as we entered the living room — all those beautiful Christmas decorations and the tree standing so tall covered with lights, ornaments

I made it. I was home for Christmas and Santa was sure to find

Mark J. Campana Birmingham

NE OF my favorite Christmas memories goes back to 1965, I was 10 years old and in our church play. The church was decorated with a large freshly cut Christmas tree. Candles glowed on the altar and in the windows and in

the inter and in the windows and in candelabra on every pew. The service ended with the organist playing "Silent Night" on the church hells. As we filed out past the big oak doors into the night, to our wanderful

surprise, it was snowing.
All of the children dashed over to the adjourning school for our Christmas treat. There, at the school door, stood one of the teachers, door, stood one of the teachers, holding a big hurlup bag, My beart was pounding in anticipation and worry. Suddenly it was my torn, and in one hand I was given a box of hard candies and in the other a camera. I was thrilled!
My family drove to River Rouge to

visit my Aunt Mary, Uncle Roland and all of my cousins.
The outside of the house was

brightly decorated with strings and strings of lights, Inside, a fat Christmas tree was laden with lights, halls and tinsel.

During dinner, we heard an announcement on the radio that Santa had been spotted flying over Dearborn, and my dad said it was

That night while we slept in our beds, Santa left me a box of 64 crayons, a thick Christmus coloring book, a Ken doll (to be company for my Barbie) and a brand new bike. It was my best Christmas ever.

Debra Garrity

EARS AGO when my daughter was 3, she lay lifeless, lacking the will to regain her strength following a long serious illness

Nothing said to her or done for her helped. Even a suggested trip to see Santa was met with, "I go tomorrow." On Christmas Eve afternoon, we

On Christmas Eve alternoon, we bundled her up and went in search of a miracle called Santa Claus.
Entering his castle at the North Pole, we saw no one standing in line so dad started toward Santa.
Suddenly we heard, "Well, hello there! Where have you been? I've been waiting for you!"

been waiting for you!"
With that, she raised her head from dad's shoulder and looked around. Seeing Santa smiling at her she said, "Down Daddy, I go myself," and she wiggled away.

When he realized she wasn't strong enough to walk that distance, Santa sprang from his chair and swooped her into his arms, hugging her gently as he returned to his chair. They sat and talked for several minutes and her strength seemed to return with

his every word.
Their visit over, Santa again gathered her in his arms and, after a kiss on the cheek and another hug, returned her to dad while everyone in the room smiled with tears in their

As we were leaving, this wonderful man called out, "Goodby little princess, FII see you later — at your louse— and remember, Santa loves

You."
Yes, we went looking for a miracle and found it in a Santa I'll never

Lafern E. Porter