

# As the children grow older

They used to set cookies out for Santa, and a big carrot or two for the reindeer. A big glass of Milk could also be found for that jolly old elf.

Then bright and early, actually more dark and early, they would wake up. Anticipation filled their eyes. Waiting, ever waiting for Mom and Dad to say it was Ok to go to their gifts.

Christmas morning was always the time for that 1 big gift the girls wanted. Christmas eve was passing gifts out from our own little family. Even after the existence and identity of Santa was discovered, the girls waited for the Santa gifts on Christmas morning. We did well at hiding the gifts, or even how we were able to get them. Our oldest thought for years, that her Grandparents were helping Santa. Not true and it never was. Save a dollar or two every week and the presents could be found.

This year there are less presents in the house. The girls all know were Santa gets his gifts. They don't wake up before the crack of dawn anymore (Ok, well 1 still does, but that is her everyday wake up time). No cookies, no carrots, and no glass of milk was waiting for Santa. Of course Santa joined the gym and is trying to loose weight. ☐

Later today, much will be the same. On to the grandparents to celebrate the day. Much will not. 2 daughters are married and on their own. One many states away. Another daughter engaged, but she, and her fiance will be with us this day. One in her last year of High School. Their mother has been gone for 5 Christmases now, she is missed.

Again, may you find hope and peace during this season, and through the entire year.