

## Happy Christmas in July 2023

**Christmas in July**

by Santa AL 7-15-23

Christmas in July began in 1933 at Camp Keystone, a girls' camp in Brevard, NC. The journal "Recreation" in 1935 reported it as a summer camp activity with a parade, singing carols, small gifts and a Santa Claus visit.

"Christmas in July" the 1940 movie, starring Dick Powell and Ellen Drew is the story of an unemployed dreamer who enters an advertising jingle competition for Maxford coffee. He wins by an administrative error. With the winnings, he buys gifts for friends, family and a wedding ring. When the error is discovered, he's asked to return the money. Then it is learned how he spent it on others. They decided to let him keep the money. He had won second place. With his new reputation he is hired as an Advertising Executive.

During the summers of the early 1980's Irish tourists to New South Wales Australia, where it is winter, began a Christmas in July celebration. Now it's a popular celebration 'Down Under'.

The West Jefferson Christmas Tree Festival in July festival began in 1987. It continues to grow. The National Christmas Tree Association has recognized Ashe County as the most productive Christmas Tree County in the country. The Blue Ridge Santa, Santa Sam & Mrs, Julia Simmons return to West Jefferson.

Christmas in July is celebrated throughout the country. In 2016 returning from a family reunion in Central California, on the fourth Sunday of July, we were camping at the *Kampgrounds of America* in Bozeman MT. Their cafeteria had a free Sunday breakfast. A continuous parade of campers came through the line. Across the dining hall sat two couples at a small table. A gentleman looked like a real bearded Santa. He had that look and feel of being real, a ready laugh during the conversation and gestures a little exaggerated. He wore some red. I

introduced myself, gave him my Santa AL business card and asked him where he did his Santa work?

“Right here”, he said. “I live in my 5<sup>th</sup> wheel, work for the camp and am their Santa Claus for their Christmas in July weekend events including the fireworks. I’m Santa Johnny Boudreau from Orange, Texas on the Gulf Coast at the Louisiana state line. That is where I do my winter Santa work”. We discussed other facets of the Santa’s work. As I was leaving, Santa Johnny said, ”Happy Christmas in July, Santa AL”. with a little Cajun lilt to his voice. He was celebrating Christmas in July all month long.

The call is for all to help spread and share the Spirit of Christmas by helping to celebrate Christmas in July.

“Happy Christmas in July!”

AL CAPEHART  
AKA Santa AL  
email: [santa@santaal.com](mailto:santa@santaal.com)