

## THE LAS VEGAS SURPRISE

Coming in for a landing at the Las Vegas airport, my mind whirling, emotions high, I couldn't wait to get to the baggage area where I knew my son, Randy would be waiting for me. I was ready for a big hug and to see my family. I was thrilled to be spending another Christmas with them and I had yet to see their new home.

I live in Medford, Oregon where we get lots of winter rain and occasional snow storms. I love the winters when the snow falls and I love waking up to snow covering the ground and the sharp, crisp air. Every snowfall I always make a snowman. Once my snowman was only 12" tall, as the snow barely covered the ground, but he stood by my front porch in all his glory—snow and snowmen, they go together.

It had been spitting snow for the last several weeks and a big storm was heading our way as I was getting ready for my trip to Vegas. I love the snow—it is my passion, so I was a little grieved that I was going to miss it because it hardly ever snows in Vegas. They have snow in the surrounding hills in the Mount Charleston area, but you have to drive some miles to get there. I told myself that the storm would probably pass over Medford and I wouldn't miss a thing and brought my thoughts back to my visit and celebrating Christmas with family and friends in Vegas.

The following week my daughter, Lorrie, called to tell me that we had a big snow storm with several inches on the ground and another big storm was due to hit. *"Wouldn't you know I'd miss all the snow at home!"* I thought feeling somewhat let down. Then I simply said, *"Well God, you know how I love the snow and if you could see fit to send that snow storm my way, I would be extremely blessed!"*

I shared with my grandson, Ryan that it was snowing in Medford, and he quickly said, "Are you sorry you're here in Vegas?" I laughed and said, "Goodness no, I'm glad I'm here. I wouldn't miss out on this Christmas time for all the tea in China." Feeling a little sheepish, I did tell him that I had asked God to send the snow storm this way. He grinned and said, "In Vegas? G R A N D M A!" I just smiled; knowing nothing was impossible for my God.

The next day sitting at the table doing some writing, something out the window caught my eye. Much to my amazement I saw tiny snowflakes swirling down from the sky. I jumped up, grabbed my camera, raced to the door, threw it open and ran outside. I couldn't believe it. It was actually snowing. The flakes were coming down faster and thicker. I laughed in joy, and then bowed my head thanking God for granting my heart's desire—a beautiful snow storm—in the midst of Vegas and thinking my family isn't going to believe this.

I heard Ryan come home from school. He burst through the front door—hollering, “Grandma, it’s snowing, can you believe it? It’s snowing! It doesn’t snow in Vegas! This is awesome. God sent your snow storm!” He was as excited as I was.

The snow was coming down full force. Everywhere you looked was white with snow—it was piling up fast. We raced outside. Suddenly Ryan dropped to the ground making a snow angel. I laughed saying, “Wow, cool! A six foot angel!” I did resist the impulse though to hit the ground myself making a smaller snow angel. We took some pictures and finally, Ryan looked at me and said, “Grandma, you’re covered with snow and you’ve been sick. You’d better go back inside or Dad will get onto us both. Reluctantly, I agreed, and we headed indoors.

Once inside I told Ryan you can’t have snow and not make a snowman. He changed his school clothes and said, “Okay, grandma, let’s do it, but you need to say inside. You can watch me out the window, but don’t come outside. It’s too cold. His back to me, he didn’t see the face I pulled. Heading out the door he suddenly stopped, turned around and asked, “But first Grandma, I have a question, how do you make a snowman?” Don’t laugh now, remember, he was raised in Las Vegas. I still laugh thinking back on it and remembering the look on his face.

I did sneak outside several times, because after all I had to take pictures of Ryan making his snowman in the back yard of his house in Las Vegas. That was news!! The snowman finished and decorated, although we forget his scarf, Ryan came inside pleased with his creation. The snow kept falling through the afternoon and into the night. I am in seventh heaven; although we were a little concerned about the rest of the family making it home safely.

Mom was the first one home and Ryan had his next adventure with snow—shoveling off the driveway, so mom could pull the car into the garage. I’m standing at the door laughing so hard my stomach hurt at the sight; Ryan bent over the shovel in his shorts and a heavy coat shoveling snow for all his is worth; the snow still falling fast and furious. The rest of the family after a little rescue work by Randy finally made it home safe and sound. It snowed 8 inches that night and lingered on for several days.

It was a most memorable visit and I have lots of pictures to remember it by—snow in Vegas! Measurable snow has only fallen on four other occasions since 1937 in the city of Las Vegas and then only 2 inches. It was the first time there was a snow day in Ryan’s school district in 30 years. The next day listening to a radio announcer, I chuckled to myself as he was sharing his experience with the snow. Bottom line—being raised in the dessert, he said it took him a bazillion hours to drive home and if he never saw snow again it would be too soon.

My heart still fills up with love and praise for a God who care about the desires of His children. Some may laugh and say the snow storm was just a coincidence, but you'll never make this 73 year-old grandmother doubt that God sent the storm.

**See the snowflake that landed on Ryan's chin?**



**Ryan's masterpiece**



**Grandma's 6-foot snow angel.**



**A new experience for Ryan**