

**BOB VESEL'S TIMELESS TRADITION:  
A WMTR AM RADIO ICON'S LEGACY OF LIGHTING UP THE GREEN WITH  
SANTA CLAUS IN 1950S**



Doris & Bob Vesel with Santa  
Photo Courtesy of Donna Vesel

In 1951, my Dad, Bob Vesel, was the program director and well-known radio personality for WMTR AM radio. Each year he emceed the arrival Santa Claus on the roof of Bamberger's. Together, they would flip the switch and light up the Green before thousands of excited onlookers! Santa would then climb down a fire engine ladder, walk to his house in the center of the Green to hear the children's Christmas wishes.

One year, as my Dad told it, Santa tripped over a microphone wire and almost went over the roof edge, in front of everyone! Fortunately, he didn't, and the festivities went on as usual.

The attached photo shows my Mom (expecting me in 1951), Dad and Santa. My Dad knew Santa quite well, and one year he even came to our house and I MET him – you can imagine my joy.

Memories are vivid in my mind, the lights, wooden rocking horses and Santa's house – what a blessing.

My parents moved to New Mexico in 1975 with my 5-year-old sister Crista, and I followed a few years later. They lived happily ever after – and their stories live on in our hearts ...

Merry CHRISTmas!  
Donna Vesel  
Albuquerque, NM