

A SPECIAL TREE

By Vera Blaine

Here I am, a slender fir tree, standing so tall that my crown is taller than the four-story building not far from me. During my many years here at Windsor Gardens, my branches have grown in perfect symmetry. This Christmas season again I'm proud to show off those thousands of lights that the maintenance crew has just placed on me.

Now that the leaves have fallen from the deciduous trees around me, I am more visible to the people who are walking, sometimes with their dogs, and to the cars, trucks and busses passing by. Sometimes I worry that in their hurry to get to wherever they are going they never look up to my full height to see how beautiful I am, and especially the shining bright star at my very top.

I am not a newcomer to Windsor Gardens. I was one of the first trees planted here when this retirement community was built almost fifty years ago. I was a small tree, maybe three feet tall, from a nursery not too far away. I have never regretted that I didn't grow up in a forest. My life here has been a very contented life.

Several generations have come and gone. I can recall the parade celebrating the 25th anniversary of Windsor Gardens, then another one for the 40th anniversary. In a few years they will be celebrating their 50th anniversary and I look forward to seeing that one, too.

As I've said before, the Christmas Season is my favorite time of the year, and I am proud to be part of the colorful display of lights and decorations throughout the complex. In summer, I have full view of the swimming pool. I see the gazebos often used for picnics.

I hope you will be sure to look for me whenever you pass by on Center Avenue, a short distance west of the intersection with Clinton Street.