

Growing Up a Teenager in Winter Beach

Janet Walker Anderson

As a teenager in Winter Beach, my mom, Lizzie, my sister, Lena, my brothers, Huey and Dewey lived on the corner of 67th St and US#1 (now Old Dixie.) My dad, Emmett Walker, passed away in 1944.

I was in the center of things. There was a set of 3 cut off poles tied together on "the corner" in the front of Mrs. Debbie Fletcher's home. It was the meeting place of all the teenagers every night. Then we would sit around and gab or walk to the river or the Restaurant at the Circle Motel, about ½ mile from corner. We would buy a Coke and play the juke box, playing the latest songs as long as our nickels would hold out, then head back to the corner to finish out the night until time to go home.

Junior Woods was older than the rest of us and his dad would let him use the family car sometimes. We would all pool our money and buy a gallon of gas and we would all pile in the car and ride around as long as our gallon of gas would last.

If any of the kids were going to be late to "the corner" or had a message for anyone, they would come over to our house to let us know what was going on so we could pass it on.

When some of the older guys got jobs and bought a truck, they would cut it down and make a beach buggy out of it. We would all pile on and go ride the beach. If we found a sea turtle, we would kill and clean it and then share it with the people in the area so we could have meat to go with our rice and tomatoes and other vegetables that the farmers shared with everyone.

We went to Vero High School in ninth through twelfth grades and caught the bus at the Post Office under the oak tree every morning. If we saw someone running late, then the bus driver would wait on them and not give us an excuse to play hooky.

If we wanted to go to town, Vero Beach, some of us would catch the bus for 10 cents, go to the movies for 9 cents, and get Coke and popcorn for 5 cents... a real treat. Then we would see someone in town we knew and catch a ride back to Winter Beach.

We all went to the First Baptist Church of Winter Beach and most of our extra activities were at the church. We were there a lot, just enjoying being with each other and learning God's Word. We had Sunday School teachers that loved the Lord, and wanted us to know and love Him too.

In 1955, I was married in the church to Marion Anderson who also grew up in Winter Beach and we had known each other all our lives. We liked the area so much we never moved away, living in the same house on 65th Street for 53 years. I still live there, but Marion went home to be with the Lord in March, 2015.

Winter Beach, is still a great place to live!!!