

Holiday films boost Christmas spirit

Students binge on seasonal films annually

BY HENRY KELLY
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Christmas movies have become just as much a tradition as Santa himself. Although some of these Christmas movies do not always have the most intriguing storylines, that does not stop students from watching their favorite holiday film every year. The results of a recent poll from The Lion's Roar show that *Elf* is the most popular Christmas movie among the student body. In second place was *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*, and in third place the winner was *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*. Many of the students add to the tradition of watching their favorite Christmas movies by enjoying certain foods and drinks every year. "We always watch *Elf* on Christmas Day or Eve," Torie Fuentes said. "And we always drink hot chocolate and eat popcorn." Junior Emmy Shirley and sophomore Jesse Vega both cook their own food to eat as they watch Christmas movies. "Every year, we cook up a bunch of snacks to eat," Shirley said. "Then we usually all fall asleep on the couch while watching the movie." Vega's cooking adds a bit more culture to her tradition. "My favorite Christmas movie is *Elf*," Vega said. "My mom and I always make tamales and chocolate chip cookies on Christmas Eve and watch the movie." For some students, the movie is enjoyed while participating in other Christmas

activities. "My family watches *Elf* every year," seventh-grader Laney Jaco said. "My brother and I decorate the tree while it's on." Although they watch it every year, for many students the movie is just as enjoyable

than just once a year. "I watch *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* every year, at least twice," sophomore Chase Hill said. "I like it because it delivers the message of kindness." Some students' traditions are a bit more unusual than others.

Hawkins appreciates a more alternative Christmas movie. "I like watching the movie *Black Christmas*," Hawkins said. "I enjoy it because it's filled with suspense." Although most students favor either animated or live-action, senior Chelsi Freasier says

Others enjoy puppet Christmas movies. "Every year, my family watches *The Muppets Christmas Carol*," Shirley said. "I love all the characters and the story." The holiday movie not only gets Shirley into the Christmas spirit, but also the singing spirit. "Sometimes when we were watching the movie, my sister, brother, and I break out in song with the Muppets," Shirley said.

Other students enjoy action-packed Christmas movies to get them in the Christmas spirit. "I like watching *Die Hard* around Christmas time," sophomore Harvey Hinkle said. "It's fun to watch, and it's technically a Christmas movie."

Sophomore Madison Russell enjoys watching her favorite Christmas movie because it reminds her of family. "I usually watch *Night Before Christmas* every year," Russell said. "I like watching it because it was my Meme's (grandma) favorite movie."

Some students enjoy watching certain Christmas movies because it reminds them of their childhood.

"I love watching *Frosty the Snowman* because it is a classic Christmas movie," eighth-grader Max Balliew said. "It reminds me of what I used to think about when I was younger." Balliew watches the movie and eats with all of his family members.

Although there are many different types of Christmas movies out there that students watch for the holidays, there is still a tradition that keeps them interested year after year.

So while shopping, food, and Christmas trees have all been traditions for years, movies have now become time-honored traditions in their own right.



Two students gather for a Christmas movie marathon and attempt to decide between holiday classics, *Santa Clause 2*, starring Tim Allen, or a student favorite, *Elf*, starring Will Ferrell. A school-wide survey revealed that *Elf* took first place with a total of 27 percent of the votes. The second place movie was *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* with 14 percent, followed in third by *Dr Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas* in third place with 12 percent. PHOTO BY HENRY KELLY

as the first time they saw it. "I watch *Elf* every Christmas," sophomore Weston Vickers said. "I laugh just as hard as the first time I watched it." Christmas movies often contribute to the mood of the holidays. "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation gets me in the Christmas spirit each year," sophomore Chloe Fields said. "My whole family watches the movie by the fire." Some even watch their favorite Christmas movie more

"Our whole family gets together to watch *Rudolph*," said eighth-grader Abigail Moore. "We all go into the living room wearing antlers while holding bowls of popcorn to watch the movie." Other students enjoy movies that aren't typical Christmas stories. "My favorite movie is *Nightmare Before Christmas*," sophomore Katarina Caudel said. "I like it because it has both Halloween and Christmas in it." Like Caudel, senior Ben

otherwise. "My favorite Christmas movie is the Claymation *Jack Frost*," Freasier said. "I love clay movies, and the story line is great." Senior Taylor Brooks compares his favorite holiday movie to his own family. "My favorite Christmas movie is *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*," Brooks said. "It's a perfect representation of my crazy relatives that come to visit during the Christmas break."



The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, part 2
November 16, 2015 PG-13 137 min
Fantasy | Science Fiction
Realizing the stakes are no longer just for survival, Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence) teams up with her closest friends, including Peeta (Josh Hutcherson) and Gale (Liam Hemsworth) for the ultimate mission. What lies ahead are mortal traps, dangerous enemies and moral choices that will ultimately determine the future of millions.
Stars: Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson
Staff Review: [4 lion icons]

Creed
November 25, 2015 PG-13 133 min
Drama | Sports
Adonis Johnson (Michael B. Jordan) never knew his famous father, boxing champion Apollo Creed, who died before Adonis was born. However, boxing is in his blood, so he seeks out Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone) and asks the retired champ to be his trainer. With Rocky's help, Adonis soon gets a title shot, but whether he has the true heart of a fighter remains to be seen.
Stars: Michael B. Jordan, Sylvester Stallone
Staff Review: [4 lion icons]

Paranormal Activity: The Ghost Dimension
October 23, 2015 R 95 min
Horror
Ryan Fleece, his wife Emily, and their daughter Leila are preparing for Christmas in their new home. After finding an old and mysterious camcorder, Ryan learns that it can record strange apparitions that are invisible to the naked eye. When young Leila starts talking to an imaginary friend and displaying strange behavior, the couple find themselves in a battle with a supernatural force.
Stars: Chloe Csengery, Hallie Foote
Staff Review: [2 lion icons]

The Peanuts Movie
November 6, 2015 G 93 min
Adventure | Comedy
Life always seems complicated for good ol' Charlie Brown (Noah Schnapp), the boy who always tries his best against seemingly impossible odds. When the Little Red-Haired Girl moves into his neighborhood, Charlie Brown develops a crush on her. Meanwhile, his best friend Snoopy embarks on an epic adventure in a fantasy world.
Stars: Noah Schnapp, Troy Andrews (Trombone Shorty)
Staff Review: [4 lion icons]



Love The Coopers

There was nothing to love about *Love The Coopers*. The story describes the pain and unhappiness of families during the holidays. After watching the movie, I realized the deception of the trailer, which made it out to be a light-hearted and funny movie. But when I saw it, I couldn't help feeling gloomy. The only thing that kept me interested was the hope of all the problems being resolved in the end, but all that resulted was a five-minute scene where everyone looked happy for the first time in the whole movie. Although it kept me in the theater, it didn't keep others. As I sat watching the movie, several people left, some leaving only thirty minutes in. Many of the characters that seemed one way in the trailer, came off a completely different way. As the movie began, you quickly begin to hate the snobby characters and never could build a relationship with them and sympathize with them. Although the film was trying to show the side of Christmas when families aren't having the best time, it came off as annoying, because there are other people far less fortunate than the whiny characters in this movie. The script was quirky, with the dog serving as the narrator, who talked about himself in third person. The characters talk about some trip, but never really explained why they wanted to go so badly. The writers tried to add a few funny lines, but they seemed

poorly thought out or just plain stupid. This film will easily be forgotten. Unlike *Elf* and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, it will never be known as a Christmas classic. This movie is one I wouldn't suggest to anyone. It is easily one of the worst Christmas films I've ever endured.



Spectre

A hard follow-up film, *Spectre* held its ground after succeeding *Skyfall*. The film went back to what its best at with car chases and fancy suits to make this film an excellent one. Daniel Craig plays 007 in his fourth James Bond movie. He portrays the part very convincingly and is considered by many as the best James Bond, though others of the older generations may disagree. Craig carries on the tradition of a classy spy who always saves the day. The setting was one of the engaging aspects of the movie, using several different locations including London, Mexico, Rome, Morocco, and Austria. This provides for beautiful backgrounds in each

of the scenes as well as a great adventure for Bond in this action-packed movie. Although it's not easy to follow up a great film like *Skyfall*, *Spectre* did it well. The movie provided a great sense of thrill as well as a romance between James Bond and Madeleine Swann (Léa Seydoux). The mystery behind the villain (a childhood companion) who was thought to be dead adds a great twist to the storyline. The action keeps you on the edge of your seat and reminds viewers just how great the Bond movies are with these scenes. Although it goes back to its roots for yet another movie, it is not at all stale or repeating. The story is unique and ties back to the previous Bond movies but doesn't require that. For movie goers that have seen the previous titles, it is very enjoyable if you have never seen a James Bond movie or if you have seen every James Bond movie. I would recommend this movie to those who enjoy the James Bond series or who just simply love action-packed movies.

