

The Spotlight

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A Useless Attempt to Explain Hallmark Movie Cliches

By Katie Cleary and Hadley Allen

Two main characters used to date in high school; they reconnect and start to date again

Usually the girl left him at the prom or something like that. They were crowned prom king and queen, and she left him on the stage. Despite this “traumatic” experience, they rekindle their love when she literally runs into him when sprinting around a street corner, spilling her hot coffee all over this poor man.



The inevitable snowball fight

This one is pretty self-explanatory. These are always fun in the movies when in reality it's a blast until that one kid just grabs a rock and chucks it at your head. This'll start abruptly when they're just walking through the small town on a first date that isn't actually a first date because they're “just friends”...we'll see about that.

Single parents really annoying daughter who pushes the couple to date

This kid always seems to understand love more than the full grown adults who used to date in high school. Also, this kid has no qualms at all. Apparently the love interest is just okay with uprooting their whole life to be a mom or dad in the name of love, even though their lifestyle could often not permit them to be a dedicated or involved parent. What's even more funny is that the daughter actually convinces them to date despite extremely contrasting lifestyles and interests. But hey, why not let the nine-year-old decide? **Cont. Pg 3**

Holiday Giving Tips

By Ellie Goetz

This winter season you can spread holiday cheer by donating and giving out care packages to homeless people in need, especially during these colder months. If you are looking for ideas of items to get the homeless, here are some affordable options! Homeless shelters are taking individual items, or you can get into the holiday cheer and make a care package.

Clothing: If you and/or your family are cleaning out your old winter gear for some new items, make sure to save it. Shelters happily take winter coats, hats, gloves, boots, scarves, and much more. Also, socks are commonly forgotten and are one of the most important items. Wool socks are great for the cold months, so if you are willing to spend a little more on an item, wool socks are recommended! Normal socks are also appreciated as well.

Blankets: Layering is crucial for the homeless to stay warm in the winter. Walmart is selling blankets for two dollars. Instead of getting one for yourself at a great deal, maybe buy a few and give them to the homeless instead.

Food/Water Bottles: Non-perishable food and water bottles are great items to give to the homeless. Many grocery stores around town sell cans of food for less than one dollar. Buying even a few cans can feed someone for a whole day and only cost you a few bucks. If you are passing out kits yourself and don't want to carry around cans, you can buy items like granola bars in bulk and divide them among each kit.

Hygiene: Things such as deodorant, body wipes, lotion, and chapstick can be very helpful for the homeless. You can find inexpensive toiletries at places like the dollar store.

Drawstring Bags: If you are making your own kits, drawstring bags are a good way to package up all of the items. They are useful because the homeless can re-use them to carry other items. You can buy affordable packs of drawstring bags on Amazon for a low cost. If you can't access drawstring bags, you can always use grocery bags or large ziplock bags instead.

Kind Note: Again, if you are personally making care kits, try to add a note of kindness. You never know what someone has gone through to get where they are, so writing a caring note to them can give them the courage to make it through another season. If there is a chance to make their day even a little bit better, why not try it? Tell them that you are proud of them, they are strong, and other words of encouragement. The homeless don't frequently hear phrases of kindness and they are the ones that need it most.

Many people will be struggling these next few months, so every bit of help is huge. Make an effort this holiday season to help the homeless. Whether you are donating to a shelter or making your own kit, thank you for being giving; your actions never go unnoticed!



Is Santa bringing the cure for COVID?

By Casey Schmidt

We have all heard them, the rumors that are spreading, but are they true? Is there really a cure to the Coronavirus? And how effective is it? Well, here are the answers.

President-elect Joe Biden tweeted on November 16, 2020 that news of a second vaccine gives us reason to be hopeful even though "we are still months away." Other sources, including CNN, ScienceMag, and Healthline, can confirm that there are currently two vaccines and through multiple experiments and testings, the vaccines have been deemed over 90% successful in preventing the virus. It is unclear as to when this vaccine will be distributed to the public, but many sources agree sometime in the spring of 2021 or even earlier. Unlike most vaccines that take years to create, this vaccine has been in progress for only 10 months. This rapid progress can be attributed to the many donations received to help fund this effort. As for those worried about the trustworthiness of this vaccine, it has been tested on humans and none have experienced fatal side effects.

So Santa most likely will not be bringing the vaccine down the chimney, but there are hopes for 2021.

A Useless Attempt to Explain Hallmark Movie Cliches cont.

Random magic?

This one usually takes place with a “Christmas wish.” Typically there is some time limit to when this wish will expire. The protagonist will have some set use of her wish in her mind, and then the wish will run out before she can do it. Then she has to resort to her newfound courage and charm. At the end, the main character will realize that the magic was “inside her heart” all along, rendering the “Christmas wish” as a useless placebo that was incredibly unnecessary.

Someone always doesn't like Christmas, and then they get their mind changed

Usually this happens when one of the main characters experienced something traumatic that scarred them from Christmas forever. However, do not fear. Our larger-than-life protagonist and her pushy nine-year-old daughter will change his mind with the power of love and Christmas spirit. To top it off, she'll even fix the broken relationship he has with his parents in one conversation.

Boyfriend is secretly a prince

This one happens more than you'd think and definitely more than you'd like. He'll take her to finally meet his parents after, like, four years of dating. They “live out of the country” and they need to travel to his home country. Next thing you know, they're pulling into one of the castle's driveways. The mom and dad are either really cool or really stuck up.

Distant and manipulative boyfriend vs rugged Christmas tree man from hometown

The main character will always hesitate to date the rugged Christmas tree man whom she ran into while getting a tree with her annoying daughter. He helped her saw down her tree after she embarrassingly failed to do so. And get this, he works at a Christmas tree farm and he helps her by doing his job--how romantic. But she can't spontaneously date this man because she has an emotionally abusive or neglecting boyfriend who's always a businessman and is always wearing a suit no matter where he is.

Everyone needs to prepare for the big holiday event

Apparently this is the only thing they do all year, and it's some big deal. It's usually some sort of Christmas festival and the entire town is in on it. The two main characters will have to work together on some kind of project (apparently they don't have full time jobs or anything better to do), which will make them realize that they've been in love since their sophomore year of high school.

Realizes it's Christmas--somehow you forgot

Typically they realize after it starts to snow, but we'll get to that later. Usually after they finally resolve whatever chaotic conflict they were facing, they just then remember that it's Christmas morning. Somehow, there's still a bunch of gifts that they definitely didn't have time to buy or wrap under the tree that they didn't have time to decorate. Sometimes, this realization will occur at midnight when it starts to snow. They look up at the sky and see SANTA FLYING IN FRONT OF THE MOON!!! Ho Ho Holy crap, just no. It's definitely a plane, but for the sake of the movie, we'll go with it.

A frustrating misunderstanding that keeps the main characters apart

They never actually have a conversation about this like a healthy couple would. The woman will see the man she's falling in love with... wait for it... talking and smiling with another girl. The audacity this man has to actually be a polite person and talk! She'll think this is his ex girlfriend that he's going to get back together with and she'll storm away from the Christmas festivities. In reality, it was actually just a cousin or old friend.

Always a white Christmas despite weather pattern

You live in California? Oh well, it's snowing on Christmas. Typically this is caused by that random Christmas magic we talked about earlier. Somehow it's always snowing despite the fact that here in Cleveland, a place with quite a bit of snow, the last white Christmas happened maybe five years ago. It's always this “cherry on top moment” where the whole crew is brought together to celebrate this Christmas miracle.

Keeping Gifts Local, Merry, & Bright this Season

By Samantha Poore

It's a holiday season once again! Why not spread the joy with handcrafted gifts and homemade goodies directly from Olmsted Falls? These OFHS entrepreneurs started small and have flourished into successful local businesses. Take a minute to get to know them and see what they have to offer. Who knows, maybe you'll find the perfect gift you've been searching for (even if it's not for Christmas)!

Treats by Tess

**Tess Blain*

With a variety of delicious desserts to choose from, you can't go wrong. From cookies to brownies to beautifully decorated cakes, there's a little something for everyone.

What are some holiday-themed treats you plan to create this season?

Definitely some Christmas-themed sugar cookies, chocolate peppermint cupcakes, and possibly some gingerbread cookies? I honestly just make what sounds good most of the time!

Do you have any personal favorites?

Personally, I am a big cookie fan so my top two favorites are my pumpkin snickerdoodles and my classic sugar cookies. Both are super delicious.

How long have you been baking? Why do you love it so much?

I started baking about a year ago, but I actually just started taking orders this past summer and it's been such a blast. I love trying new recipes and flavor combinations, but most of all, I love seeing people's reactions to my desserts!

Do you see yourself continuing

with this business in the years to come; what is your dream job?

My dream is to actually open my own bakery! This has been a dream of mine for a while now and I really can't imagine my life doing anything else. I'm loving what I am doing right now and I hope it continues to grow into a career!

MCL Scrunchies

**Casey Schmidt & Molly*

Reading

With scrunchies at the forefront, scarfies, hanging plants (for cars & rooms), and elastic wallets/wristlets are featured as well. With super cute patterns incorporated into these charming products, each are great additions to a gift.

What inspired you to team up and start this business?

Ever since I can remember I have been a crafter. I absolutely love the process of turning my visions (no matter how wild) into functional products. After realizing that I could actually put my passion to good use, I teamed up with my friend because she also had the creative edge that allows for a successful business.

Do either of you have a favorite product or design?

I really love our elastic wallets; I use mine every day and it fits everything I need. The scrunchies are also a favorite; I'm almost always wearing one!

Why would one of your products be a good gift choice?

Our products are small, inexpensive, and great quality, which make them perfect gifts/stocking stuffers. It's especially good for when you're not sure what to get someone.

Get them a wallet and stick a gift card inside. Maybe even wrap it up in a scrunchie!

What's your favorite part about having your own local business?

My favorite part of owning a business is seeing people from around school or town using/wearing our products. It is very rewarding to see your own creations helping others, even if it's just to take their outfit to the next level!

LaBlain

**Tate Blain & Lindsey LaPinta*

Embroidered crewnecks, acid-washed tops, and painted denim clothing items provide various customization opportunities.

Whether it be shoes, a shirt, or a pair of jeans, don't be afraid to give them each a makeover.

What inspired you to team up and start this business?

We both really enjoy art and wanted to put our creativity to good use. So, we put a few of our own ideas together and tried to make a small little business out of it! **Do either of you have a favorite product or design?** I don't think we really have a favorite product because we get asked to do so many different things. We both get really excited when someone asks us to customize something for them.

Why would one of your products be a good gift choice?

Our products are one of a kind and very sentimental. One item can take up to ten hours to make because we strive for quality, which shows that they come from the heart. We are actually coming out with a Christmas line of embroidered crew necks which we are really excited

about, so stay tuned!
What are your goals for this business? Do you see yourselves pursuing a career in the arts or fashion industry?

I think we are both looking to study some sort of business or marketing major in college, which is part of the reason we started. It would be awesome to see our business grow into something more, but honestly we are just looking to make people who buy from us happy while encouraging others to take a leap of faith and try something new!

Kees Bracelets

**Keeley Patton*

With a variety of strings and beads to choose from, necklaces, bracelets, and keychains can be uniquely made upon your request. No matter the color scheme, these accessories are sure to put a smile on your face.

What inspired you to start this business?

I started in the summer of 2019 when I was on vacation. I always loved making bracelets for my friends and I was getting a lot of requests from people. I needed a way to pay for the materials, so I started charging and it went from there!

Do you have a favorite product/design?

Beaded products are a lot easier to make, but string products can be super pretty! I do like making college keychains because they're so customizable and fun.

Why would one of your products be a good gift choice?

If you want a gift in time for the holidays, I recommend beaded chokers or keychains! I have a ton of different colors and some chokers are even on sale right now!

What's your favorite part about having a local business?

I love meeting new people and

supporting other small businesses! It's been really eye opening because I now know the process of running a small business and how much work goes into it. Buying from small businesses is a great way to get handmade products with great customer service because everything is so personal!

I encourage you to check out each of their instagram pages (treats_by_tess, mclscrunchies, lablainedesigns, kees_bracelets) for details, pricing, and further instructions on placing an order. Keep in mind, these are 1-2 person businesses, so respect their timeline! Happy holidays!



Newspaper Staff

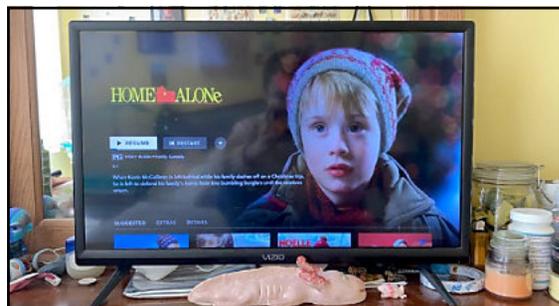
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- Sam Gaba
- Katie Gareau
- Ellie Goetz
- Rachel Korba
- Samantha Poore
- Casey Schmidt
- Claire Wiggenhorn

COVID-Friendly Winter Activities

By Cathy Doherty

It's beginning to look a lot like winter! As Covid-19 continues to wreak havoc, regular holiday traditions will have to take a back seat this season. Here is a list of several ways to celebrate the winter season while staying safe.

Cocoa and Chromebook: Grab your chromebook and a mug full of hot chocolate for this Covid-friendly activity! Text a few friends and use a platform like Netflix Party or Disney Plus's Group Watch feature to virtually watch Christmas movies together. It is a great way to be together while spending this time apart.



Safe stroll: The Crocker Park infamous Christmas tree was lit virtually on November 20th and will be up for the remainder of the holiday season. Enjoy their festive light display by walking the sidewalks with friends or family. Remember to be socially distanced and wear a mask (which will also keep your face warm)!

Six feet skating: Try your hand at skating by going to an outdoor rink in the area. Crocker Park's outdoor skate rink will be open until December 31st. They charge \$8 a ticket and \$3 to rent skates.

Tentatively, Cleveland's Public Square rink will be open until early January, but they have not released any specifics yet. With a mask over your nose and distance between you and other skaters, this is a great way to get outside and enjoy the winter weather.

Writing letters: If you are looking to brighten another's day, you can write holiday letters to those far and away. Sending letters to relatives and friends is a chance to remind those important to you that you are thinking of them during the holiday season. It is also a wonderful way to reach out to those who you may not see very often.

You could even drop off letters to nursing homes in the area to bring holiday spirit.

Something new: If you are looking

for a new hobby, now is the perfect time to explore your interests. This winter season, preheat your oven and try a new recipe. Or maybe buy some yarn at Joann Fabrics and watch a Youtube tutorial on how to knit! The possibilities are endless when you have an open mind and a little sprinkle of creativity.



Holiday Word Search

Find all the words hidden in the across, down, and diagonally, with backwards.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| O | W | R | T | E | H | M | A | I | W | T | R |
| D | W | E | E | C | A | L | P | E | R | I | F |
| A | O | E | G | G | N | O | G | L | A | U | H |
| E | A | D | O | H | U | D | O | O | L | G | I |
| R | A | N | E | S | K | H | G | I | E | L | S |
| B | T | I | E | E | K | W | A | N | Z | A | A |
| R | N | E | E | K | A | L | F | W | O | N | S |
| E | A | R | K | H | H | T | G | T | A | C | U |
| G | S | A | M | T | S | I | R | H | C | A | U |
| N | E | O | T | N | F | E | T | I | G | S | C |
| I | S | M | T | T | N | A | M | W | O | N | S |
| G | E | C | O | O | K | I | E | S | I | T | F |

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| CHRISTMAS | FIREPLACE | HANUKKAH | REINDEER | SNOWFLAK |
| COOKIES | GIFT | IGLOO | SANTA | SNOWMAN |
| EGGNOG | GINGERBREAD | KWANZAA | SLEIGH | |

Holiday Word Search: If you're looking for an exciting winter activity you can curl up with this nice holiday crossword!

Winter Sports

By Rachel Korba

Winter sports are starting and we interviewed senior athletes to share what they're looking forward to in their last winter season.

Boys Basketball: "I am looking forward to being able to compete every night with some of my best friends and make memories with them that'll last forever. I hope to win the conference and win the district final with my team like they did in 2018." -Carson Balfour

Girls Basketball: "This season I am excited to make memories with my best friends, and I also hope to be back-to-back to back SWC champs, district champs, and more." -Lauren Galaska

Bowling: "This season, I am excited to just be able to play. With the current situation, I was not sure we'd even be able to, but I'm glad all the schools figured out a way to make it work. I also hope to make districts again this year!" -Chris Mills

Cheer: "I am looking forward to cheering with a new group of girls and supporting the boys as much as we can! I am also excited to finish off my last cheer season with my fellow seniors. There's a super cool opportunity this year where we might be able

to cheer on the boys at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse, and that would be a new experience for all of us! A new season is always exciting, especially when there are new faces on the court and the sideline!" -Mia Marsico

Gymnastics: "I'm most looking forward to hopefully having a season filled with fun meets and team bonding since our team doubled in size. It also should be exciting to try for our third SWC championship title in a row. I hope that we end up achieving as close knit of a bond as we did last year and can all support each other after the season ends." -Sophia Krumroy

Hockey: "I'm definitely looking forward to having a good time and season with the boys. We're going to be a real threat this year and I couldn't be more proud and excited about how much we have improved since last season. I hope

to win the 50th annual Baron Cup this year as well as win our conference and our district. I also pray that everyone will stay healthy and injury free as our season progresses, so the systems can lead us to success." -Alex Kerkey

Swim: "I am looking forward to finishing off the season with some of my best friends, and even through these tough times I hope to see my team become closer with each other. This team has brought me so much joy from freshman year to now. I cannot wait to have a fun final season!" -Heidi Daeufel

Wrestling: "This season, I am excited to be able to compete whether there are restrictions on our season or not. I also hope to see my team win the SWC and continuously make each other better during practice." -RJ Simon



New Year's Celebration (With COVID Regulations)

By Samantha Gaba

With 2020 coming to an end and New Year's celebrations rounding the corner, the question of safe celebrations comes to mind. What qualifies as "safe partying"? There are three main ways to celebrate New Year's in 2020: with only immediate family, over an online Zoom/FaceTime call, or at a socially-distanced mask-wearing gathering. By rejoicing with immediate family members, one keeps to their "COVID bubble," a term nowadays that is used in reference to a maskless social party composed of individuals. Despite how much time has been spent in quarantine with family already, it is always nice to catch up with each others' lives (especially if family members have gossip!). However, since the March quarantine, time spent with family is well overstretched for some - which is why an online get-together with friends is perfect for New Year's. This is a safe and effective way to socialize and interact with people outside of one's "COVID bubble" for a New Year's celebration during a global pandemic. If the internet spontaneously combusts and WiFi shuts down dramatically on New Year's Eve, you can always rely on a socially distanced small gathering. Although New Year's is in the winter, it is preferable with a pandemic if celebrations are kept outside if social gatherings are underway (to ensure a safe distance between guests at all times). And by all means, pass hand sanitizer out as a party favor and make sure to wipe down all surfaces to prevent an outbreak!



Holiday Wish List

By Claire Wighenhorn

With the hectic holiday season quickly approaching, you've probably been asked, "So what's on your wish list this year?" I don't know about you but for me, I've been completely drawing a blank. It was so much easier when you could just go through the Toys R Us ad and circle the newest coolest toy. But now we need to actually think of gifts! Some good ideas would probably be clothes and gift cards to places like Target, Amazon, and American Eagle. Or Apple watches and LED lights. Here are a few ideas from your fellow OFHS classmates:

Do you lose your keys easily? A Tile might be the perfect gift for you, at least that's what sophomore Alanna Tighe is asking for! Rachel Swamp hates doing her chores, so a Rumba is the number one thing on her wish list! Katie Cleary wants to warm up by the fire with all the books she's asking for. Senior Casey Schmidt will be paddling down the river in her new Crocks and paddleboard. Bling Bling Bling! Samantha Poore and Nicole Nemeth will be shining it up in their new jewelry. Watch out! Junior Nick Vroutos is asking for a snowboard so he can hit the slopes this winter season. Sophomore Nathan O'Neil is asking for new Vans, and senior Molly Reading wants Doc Martins so they can step out in style. Freshman Samantha Goodnough is asking for a bluetooth speaker so she can play her tunes. Senior Rachael Palmer (and everyone else) just wants Covid to go away!

*In Loving Memory of Micala Christie-Hicks Siler
December 19, 1978 - September 30, 2020
Proud Graduate of Olmsted Falls (1997) and The
U.S. Military Academy in West Point, NY.
United States Army Veteran with tours of duty in
The United States, Korea, Iraq and Afghanistan
Executive Director of A Family for Every Orphan
Thank You for Your Service
Rest Peacefully*