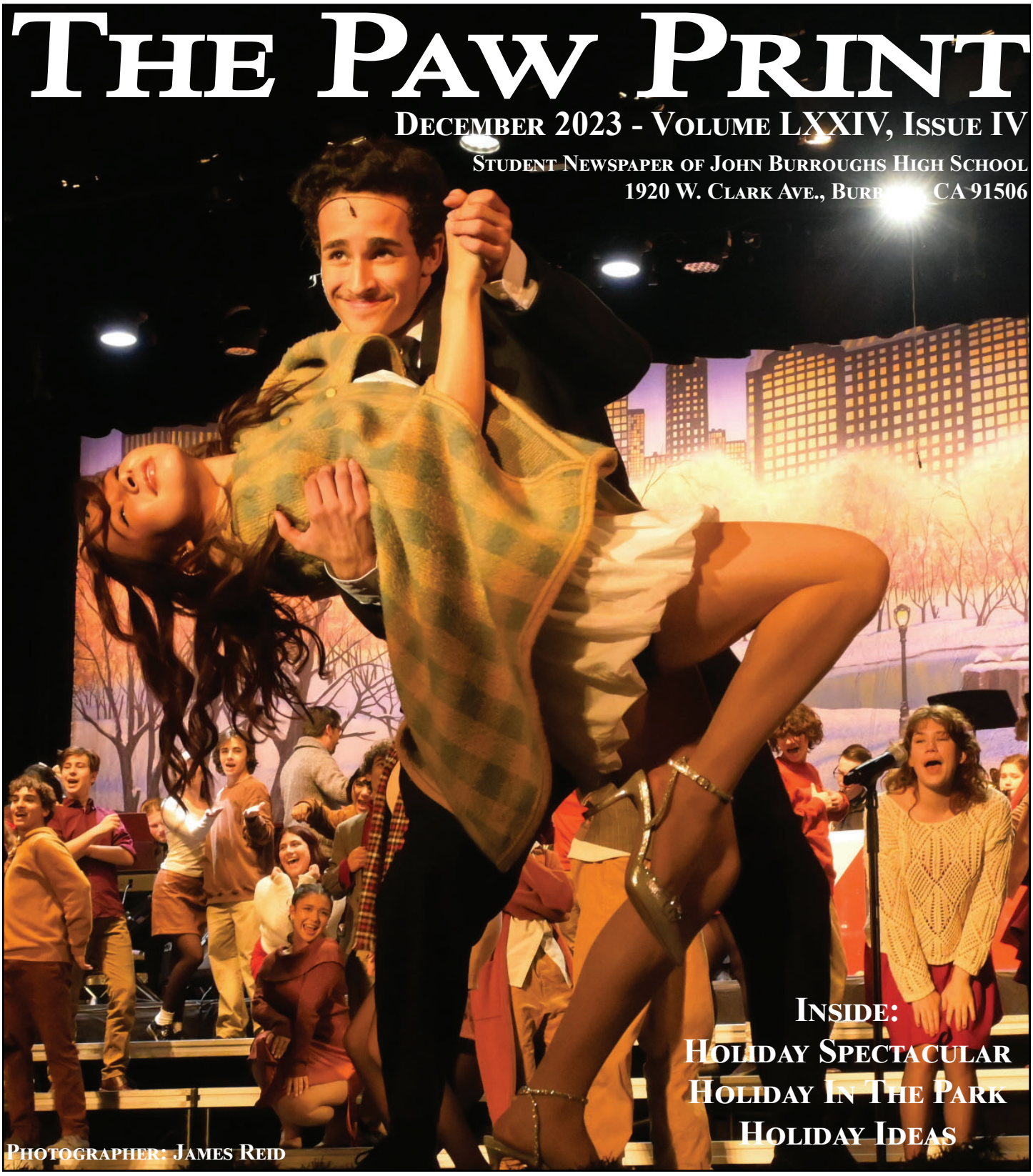
The Paw Print

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Student Newspaper of John Burroughs High School

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Photographer: James Reid

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Holiday Spectacular 2023: A Holiday Carol

By Zoe Belknap
Guest Cub Reporter

Last weekend on the eighth, ninth, and tenth of December, John Burroughs High School's wonderful arts programs all teamed up to tell a fresh new version of Dickens' A Christmas Carol that starred Silas Shulz as Scrooge and included spectacular achievements in instrumental music from the IMA and their Jazz band, choral music from the VMA's four choirs, acting from our drama department's Play Production students, and student-choreographed dance from JBHS's Dance Production group. This conglomeration of four incredible nationally ranked arts departments at our school was truly the best (ghost of) Christmas present a person could ask for!

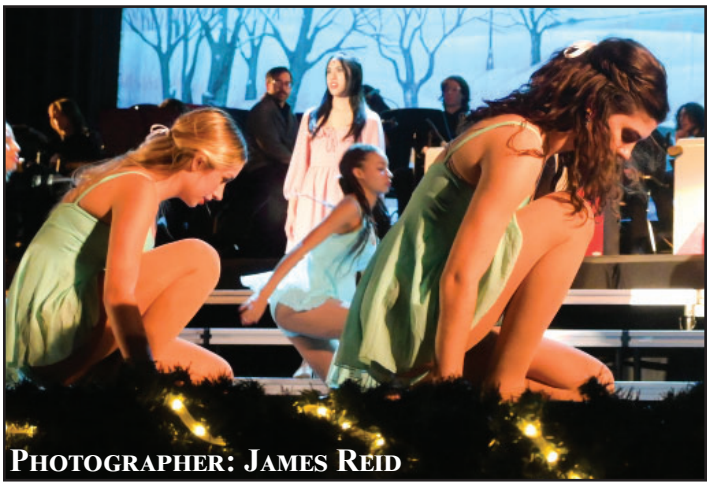
This show is the first holiday show at Burroughs to ever tell a story. Directed by the talented JBHS alumni Nevada Brandt, the characters and songs performed by each department take us through the story of A Christmas Carol. Powerhouse Junior Silas Shulz stars in the show as Ebenezer Scrooge. He is supported by a cast of choir students as well as Play Production students like Max Meserve and Scout Purdy.

Apart from the shows on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, this show was also performed in three assemblies during second period Friday. Any students who came to the show would recognize some of it's second act from these super fun assemblies.

The show begins with the Concert Band performing "Christmas Festival," and "Christmas is Here," with Dance Production ballerinas. The Concert Band is then joined by Powerhouse acappella group Neo Chromatics to perform the song "Scrooge." JBHS' award winning advanced mixed choir Powerhouse then performs the beautiful piece "Snowfall" with the piano.


Photographer: James Reid


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Then, the Concert Band plays while Hratch Kitsinian and Silas Shulz perform the song "Story of Your Life" as the characters of the ghost of Jacob Marley and Scrooge. The Concert Band then performs the song "A Christmas Carol." Then, the VMA's intermediate mixed choir Sound Waves performed the Hanukkah classic "Celebration of Light." Luke Pirucello and Makabe Ganey then sang "Put it there Pal" as the characters of Young Scrooge and Jacob Marley.

After that, Sound Sensations' Jasmine Dobie performed a beautiful rendition of "Winter was Warm" as the character of Young Elizabeth. Finally, to close out the first act, the two women's choirs of JBHS, Sound Sensations and Decibelles, performed the song "The Work of Christmas."

In the second act, the concert band cleared the stage to make room for the show choirs and Dance Production students to dance. The IMA's Jazz Band then performed with the VMA's Dan Scoville to accompany the choirs and soloists. To start the first act, the Jazz band performed "Holiday Joy."

Then, Cruz Martin sang "Christmas Electricity" as the Ghost of Holiday Present with Dance Production Hip Hop dancers and Sound Sensations' acappella group Muses. This song is originally from a comedy theater group StarKid's rendition of A Christmas Carol and our rendition of it garnered the attention of famous theater and TV stars like Darren Criss on their social media.

After that, the VMA's intermediate treble choir Decibelles per-

Holiday Spectacular 2023: A Holiday Carol

By Zoe Belknap
Guest Cub Reporter

formed Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas is You" with soloist Makenna Geoffred. Then, Sound Waves, performed their show choir piece "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm" with soloist Dylan Richer.

Kelly Hagan and Caleb Perez then performed the song "Rockin on Top of the World" as Elizabeth and her fiancé, joined by Dance Production dancers doing some Rockette-worthy kick choreography. They were followed by Olivia Zenetzis and dancers performing Phoebe Bridgers' rendition of "If We Make it Through December."

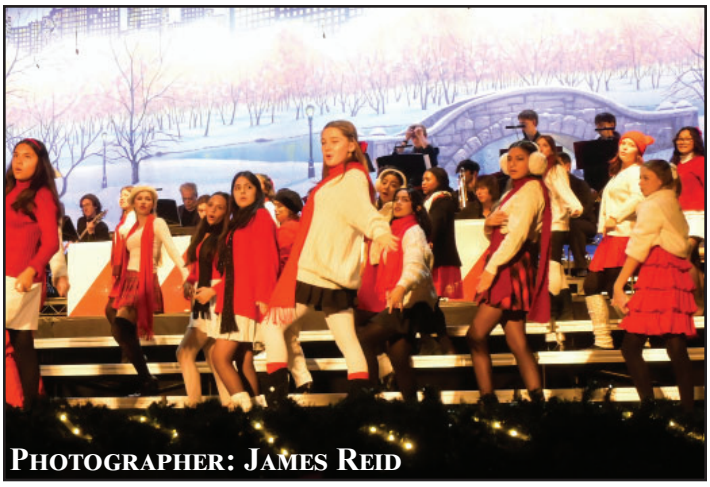
Then, the VMA's advanced women's ensemble Sound Sensations performed "Ring Silver Bells" with the Jazz Band. Jarel Montefro then performed "The Bill Comes Due" as the Ghost of Holiday Future with modern Dance Production dancers.

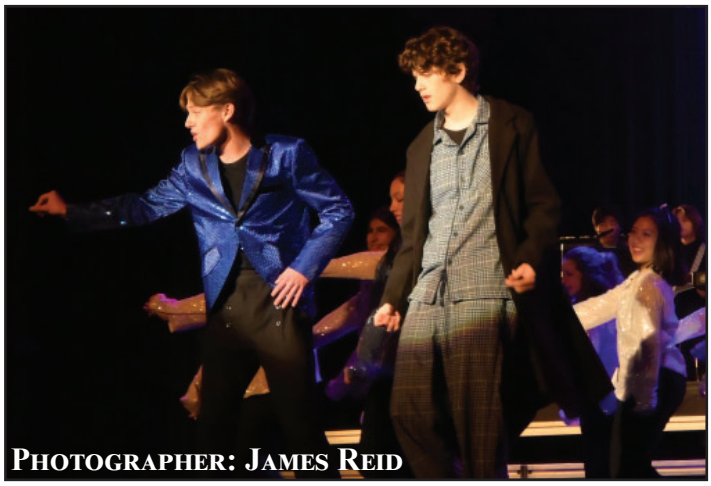
Finally, Powerhouse ended the show with their performance of "Making Christmas" from The *Nightmare Before Christmas*. They then began the song "Ripple" from Will Ferrel's Spirited with Silas Schulz (Scrooge) performing a solo.

Powerhouse is then joined by the three other VMA choirs to all sing and dance "Ripple." By the end of the song for the grand finale, Dance Production and Drama students join the choirs in the choreography. After the big finish, the presidents of the VMA, IMA, and Dance Production thanked all of the many volunteers, teachers, and parents who made this incredible show happen.

Finally, as is tradition for the VMA, choir alumni were invited onstage to join the choir students in a beautiful arrangement of "Silent Night." As the choirs put their heads down, Danielle Bax sang the beautiful solo at the beginning of the song. Then, in a touching moment, the choirs and alumni joined her and powerfully sang the rest of the song as a combined group.

The Holiday Carol was an incredible show that showcased all the incredible talent of John Burroughs High School. All of these students have exciting shows to come next semester! Until then, we can just watch how far Scrooge's ripple of kindness will go.


Photographer: James Reid


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Upcoming Dates

December 19th-21st	Finals
December 22nd	Pupil Free Day
December 25th-January 5th	Winter Break
January 8th	Spring Semester Begins
January 10th	Blood Drive
January 15th	MLK Holiday
January 29th	Grad Nite Ticket Sale
January 29-February 2nd	Spirit Week
February 2nd-4th	Shrek! The Musical
February 10th	Lunar New Year
February 12th	Lincoln Holiday
February 14th	Valentine's Day
February 19th	Presidents' Day

Christmas Parade In Toluca Lake

By River Torres
Cub Reporter

The Magical Holiday Parade is a Toluca Lake tradition that fills the hearts of residents and visitors alike with joy and wonder. As we approach that magical event once again, it is crucial to delve into its captivating history and highlight the enchantment it brings to our community year after year.

First organized in 1984, the Magical Holiday Parade started as a caroling truck that transformed into the wonderful, grand event we know today. The event quickly became a beloved annual tradition, bringing families together to celebrate the magic of the holiday season. With this ever-increasing popularity, the parade began to attract participants from neighboring communities, expanding its reach and cultural significance.

One of the standout features of the Parade is its commitment to giving back. The crowd is encouraged to donate gifts and toys to the parade volunteers, who are all dolled up in their finest holiday costumes. The presents these volunteers are given are then sent to the Penny Lane Center.

The Magical Holiday Parade is not just a visual spectacle; it is an opportunity for participants to spread holiday cheer through their beautiful and whimsical performances. Carolers from the city grace the parade route to entertain the crowd in the name of festive merriment. The contagious energy can always be counted on to ignite the spirit of the season to all who attend.

But of course, one of the main purposes of the Parade is to create lasting memories for the residents of Toluca Lake that resonate with them for years to come. Families create new traditions by attending the parade annually in the name of Christmas, what is better than that?

In conclusion, the Magical Holiday Parade in Toluca Lake, California is a truly enchanting event that captures the spirit of Christmas and brings together the community in a joyous celebration. Attending the Magical Holiday Parade is not just an event; it is an experience filled with magic, joy, and the purest form of holiday spirit. Happy Holidays everyone!



Friendsgiving

By
Cub Reporter

This year the Link Crew held their annual Friendsgiving event for all Freshmen students.

All Freshmen were invited via Google Classroom's Freshman page, social media, and fliers. Students are notified of the event early on to allow them ample time to set their calendars for the day of fun.

Link Crew holds this event every year for all new Freshmen. Their goal is to promote and provide a smooth transition into high school for all students by holding events like this to allow students to bond with each other while also getting to know their Link Crew leaders and members.

This year's Friendsgiving took place on Thursday, November 16th, and was held in the big gym during lunchtime. The Link Crew always does an amazing job for this event and provide food like chips, cupcakes, and pizza for all freshmen students. During this event they also have activities like arts and crafts, this year they had bracelet making which was really fun. Lastly, they also provided Thanksgiving pictures for coloring, and of course, you are able to take it home with you after.

Thanksgiving is a time to show gratitude and be thankful for all the blessings we have in life, a time we get to spend with our loved ones. At times we often forget about showing gratitude to our friends and classmates, so the Link Crew provides this safe space and event for students to be able to show that they are thankful for their friends, to enjoy themselves, and have some fun too.

Holiday Events In Burbank

By June Elmore
Cub Photographer

The holiday season is in full bustling swing in Burbank this year, as the temperature begins to drop, the city's events start to rise. Between holiday treats, Downtown festivities, and much more, it's hard to keep up! But fear not, the ultimate Burbank holiday events guide is here.

Starting off, a simple area like Downtown Burbank, typically inhabited by Southern California residents trying to beat the heat, suddenly transforms into a winter wonderland full of lights, wonder, and high spirits. At the heart of the area, just off of San Fernando Boulevard, is a large Christmas tree hollowed out in the center, ideal for the perfect holiday card picture. In addition to the large Christmas tree, the warmly Christmas light lined streets of the outdoor shopping area add to the festive feeling.

Whether you're getting some last minute holiday shopping done or just spending a night out on the town, downtown Burbank during the holiday season is just the place. "The holiday season in Burbank is really just so full of life and joy. I love how lit up Downtown gets during the holidays, it's cool to see the festivities in full swing," said Kyra Svab, Burbank resident and student at JBHS.

Speaking of last minute holiday shopping, the Betsy Lueke Creative Arts Center, located in George Izay Park, hosts a holiday market during December. This market is held from December 3rd through the 16th. The market has an assortment of handmade pottery, clothing, jewelry, paintings, decorations, and much more. All items are locally handmade by students and instructors at the Betsy Lueke Creative Arts Center and members of the Fine Art Federation. It's a wonderful place to find the perfect gift that will put a smile on loved ones faces as well as support local artists during the holiday season. Additionally, George Izay Park is only a few blocks away from John Burroughs High School, making it ideal for busy students in need of close opportunities for shopping. The Boutique's hours are as follows: Monday-Thursday 9AM - 8PM, Friday 9AM.-7PM, Saturday 10AM - 4PM, and Sunday 1PM - 4PM.

Burbank residents with a sweet tooth should keep an eye on local donut shops like The Donut Prince and The Donut Hut for their seasonally decorated desserts. Many students may already be familiar with both locations due to their close proximity to JBHS but students could be unaware of their holiday themed donuts. Sweetly frosted winter themed donuts line the windows of the family owned and operated businesses during the holiday season.

In other news of local holiday bites, the recently opened Three Sisters Coffee And Tea on Magnolia street intends on ringing in the holiday season with seasonal beverages.

For those hoping to give something back to the community this holiday season, volunteer opportunities in Burbank are popping up left and right. The Burbank Coordinating Council is looking for volunteers for their annual holiday basket program. The program provides assistance to economically disadvantaged Burbank families during the holiday season. Anyone over the age of twelve is eligible for volunteering. For more information visit the Burbank Coordinating Council website, burbankcc.org/letter.

In previous years, the AMC walkway in downtown Burbank has had a Menorah Lighting Ceremony on the second night of Chanukah, which is celebrated from December 7th-15th. The ceremony will be returning for a third year in 2023. This event was hosted by the Chabad of Burbank and many Burbank residents attended to celebrate in past years. In 2022 Rabbi Shmuly Kornfeld led the ceremony and is expected to be returning to lead again this year. This event is a great opportunity to come together as a community and enjoy a beautiful ceremony under the stars.

As holiday festivities begin to bud in Burbank, it's important to appreciate the togetherness and warmth of our Burbank community, checking out these events is the perfect way to do just that. Wishing you all a joyous holiday season!

Holiday Events Outside Burbank

By Kylee Johnson
Cub Reporter

Christmas is an exciting holiday celebrated by many people worldwide. Many cities hold ceremonies such as tree lightings, holiday performances, and Christmas caroling.

The city of Burbank is sure to be hosting many fun events this holiday season, but what about any other cities? If you ever happen to be in one of these nearby cities, keep an eye out for these fun holiday activities.

The Glendale Galleria is hosting multiple events where you can take pictures with Santa Claus. You can reserve a date and time to visit him on the Galleria's website, but they aren't necessary.

In addition to being able to take photos with Santa, you can also have your pet take pictures with him. There is also an option for people that have sensory issues, so they can still have the cherished memories.

Also, Glendale is home to two classic Christmas movie-themed Broadway shows at the Pantages Theater. You can book tickets to see a *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* show, or a *Home Alone* show.

A fun family event to attend in Glendale is the DUYA Christmas Toy Giveaway on December 15th, from 6 pm to 7:30 pm. Come and give away old toys to make a lasting impact on the community.

There will also be an exciting tree lighting ceremony to kick-start the 2023 holiday season. The event will take place in Eagle Rock, from 5PM to 9PM.

The Pasadena Playhouse is holding the Pasadena Playhouse Holiday Spectacular, on Saturday, December 9th, from 10PM to 3AM.

The Holiday Fest on South Lake Avenue in Pasadena is an exciting, family friendly event. There will be kids' crafts, live music, pictures with Santa, giveaways, and more fun family activities. The festival is on December 2nd, starting at 12PM.

There you have it! Some fun holiday themed activities that you can enjoy with either your friends or family. You can also enjoy some holiday activities in Burbank, but if you're out and about, you can always celebrate somewhere else.

Happy Holidays Bears!

New Christmas Trends

By Allen Kramer
Cub Reporter

The holiday season is a time of joy and tradition that brings with it exciting new trends which shape the way we celebrate Christmas each year. In 2023, several trends are making waves, adding a modern twist to this timeless holiday.

One of the top Christmas trends this year is sustainable and eco-friendly celebrations. Many people are opting for environmentally conscious choices, such as reusable or recyclable decorations, eco-friendly gift wrapping, and reducing single-use plastics. It's a meaningful way to show love for both the planet and your loved ones during the holiday season.

Another notable trend is virtual or hybrid Christmas gatherings. With the ongoing influence of technology in our lives, families and friends separated by distance are finding creative ways to come together through video calls and online games. These virtual celebrations allow for the continuation of traditions and shared moments, even when physical gatherings for any reason may not be possible.

Furthermore, minimalistic and Scandinavian-inspired decor is gaining popularity. This trend emphasizes simplicity, with natural materials, muted color palettes, and a focus on cozy, hygge-inspired atmospheres. It's all about creating a warm and inviting ambiance that's both aesthetically pleasing and comfortable for the holiday season.

Last but not least, personalized and handmade gifts are making a comeback. People are putting thought and effort into creating unique, one-of-a-kind presents that reflect their love and appreciation for the recipient. This trend embodies what for some people is the true spirit of Christmas, giving from the heart.

While many previous Christmas traditions still are kept up, these top trends of 2023 are shaping how we celebrate the holiday season. From sustainability and virtual gatherings to minimalistic décor and personalized gifts, these trends add a modern touch to the timeless joy of Christmas. It's a reminder that the magic of the season is ever-evolving, yet it continues to bring warmth and togetherness into our lives.

Best Holiday Foods

By Eve Wild
Cub Reporter

Holidays are a time when we gather with loved ones, celebrate, and enjoy delicious meals that are often steeped in tradition. Holiday foods of all sorts bring joy and create many memories. Here are some of the best classic holiday foods that make the season extra special!

Some classic holiday main course dishes that the majority have on their dinner table include roast turkey, honey-glazed ham, prime rib, and roasted lamb. These delicious meats are often associated with festive celebrations like Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. Whether it is traditional turkey, savory ham, prime rib, or roasted lamb, these meats have become legendary staples of holiday feats, bringing much joy to gatherings.

Furthermore, another favorite is cornbread. Cornbread has a crumbly texture and a sweet but buttery flavor that make it a perfect side to any festive feast. It can be used as a side dish or a base for stuffing. It can be enjoyed plain, slathered with butter, or dipped in a warm bowl of chili. Including cornbread is sure to make any holiday dinner even better.

Next is stuffing, a dish that it deserves its own mention. Whether it's made with bread, cornbread, or a combination of both, stuffing is a comforting side dish that compliments any holiday meal. The blend of herbs, olives, vegetables, and sometimes even sausage or nuts, adds lots of flavor and texture, making it a popular favorite.

Now, let's move on to holiday desserts! One iconic dessert that brings joy to many is the classic pumpkin pie. The spiced pumpkin filling, surrounded by a flaky crust, is a symbol of autumn and the holidays. Topped with a dollop of whipped cream and a side of vanilla ice cream, it's a slice of the fall season that brings feelings of warmth and fall vibes.

Another holiday dessert that often steals the show is gingerbread. The fragrant cookies shaped into festive figures like gingerbread men or houses are not only tasty but also a blast to decorate. The combination of ginger, cinnamon, and molasses creates a distinct flavor that easily transports us to this Christmas season.

Lastly, holiday staple beverages. During the holidays, warm and comforting drinks in the cold weather are always a must-have. Hot cocoa with marshmallows that can be topped with crushed candy canes and whipped cream is a crucial part of the holiday season. Additionally, a sugar cookie latte from Starbucks or even a steaming cup of eggnog are all popular choices that bring a touch of coziness.

Holiday foods are an important part of our celebrations, bringing people together can create memories all around. Including savory dishes like roast turkey and stuffing to the sweet satisfaction of pumpkin pie and gingerbread, these dishes bring a sense of tradition, comfort, and joy.



Cartoonist: Kayla Cabral

Easy Stocking Stuffer Ideas

By Evelyn McNally
Cub Reporter

Stockings are a wonderful way to enjoy the holiday season, and they make a great gift for friends and family. However, it can be hard to come up with ideas for what you should include inside them.

One good idea for stocking stuffers are cosmetics. Cosmetics can go a long way for their prices, and there's a product for everybody! Cosmetics companies like Glossier and Fenty Beauty have selections that can be a perfect touch for a friend or family member's stocking.

If you're looking for an easy option that's still thoughtful, a gift card is another great idea. Slipping a $10-15 gift card to Starbucks or Target could help complete your gift. Gift cards allow the person who's receiving the gift to go and buy whatever they want, without any struggle on your part.

Putting something that will last a long time like a book or a magazine is also another great touch to a stocking. Stores like Target or Barnes and Noble are sure to have a diverse selection of books, magazines, or comics that your gift-receiver will be sure to enjoy this winter.

Candy and other festive desserts are sure to be a good decision for friends and family too. During the holiday season, brands come out with special holiday flavors of their products, so candy might be the way to go! Special peppermint or gingerbread products can make your stocking perfect.

Finally, festive accessories like socks, gloves, hats, scarves, and more are cute and convenient. As the weather gets colder, it's nice to have a pair of gloves that you like and can be used for years to come.

Overall, stockings are a wonderful idea for the holiday season, and can be an easy but thoughtful gift idea with a little creativity!

Ursa Major Horoscopes

Aries (March 21-April 19): Beware, Aries. This month, the spirits are restless and prone to mischief. Keep your wits about you and be cautious of unexpected hauntings in your home. Your fiery nature may attract the attention of otherworldly beings, so stay vigilant and protect yourself from the unknown.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): Taurus, prepare yourself for a month of strange occurrences and unexplained phenomena. Your usual grounded nature may be tested as you encounter ghostly presences and spectral voices. Brace yourself for a hair-raising ride through the unknown.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): Gemini, your twin nature may lead you to encounter doppelgangers and shadowy figures this month. Keep your eyes peeled for signs of the paranormal, and trust your intuition when it comes to encountering otherworldly beings. It's a month of mystery and intrigue for you.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): Cancer, the spirits are whispering your name this month. Pay attention to signs and omens, as they may hold clues to your future. Don't be surprised if you encounter ghostly apparitions or visitations from the other side. Embrace the unknown and trust in the power of the supernatural.

Leo (July 23-August 22): Leo, the forces of darkness are at play this month. Stay on guard, as you may encounter eerie specters and haunted places. Your natural courage will serve you well, but be cautious not to underestimate the power of the supernatural. A chilling adventure awaits you.

Virgo (August 23-September 22): Virgo, this month brings with it a sense of unease and foreboding. Trust your instincts and remain vigilant against spectral visitations and unearthly encounters. Your analytical nature will help you navigate the strange and otherworldly events that lie ahead.

Libra (September 23-October 22): Libra, the signs are pointing to a month of ghostly encounters and paranormal activity. Keep an open mind and be prepared for the unexpected as you navigate through the shadowy realms of the supernatural. Your diplomatic nature may come in handy as you gather information from the other side.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21): As the veil between the living and the dead grows thinner, you may find yourself more in tune with the spirit world. Embrace this connection and use it to gain insight into your own life. The spirits are speaking to you, so listen carefully.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21): Sagittarius, this month brings with it a sense of mystery and intrigue. You may find yourself drawn to haunted places and ghostly encounters. Embrace the thrill of the unknown and navigate through the shadows with a sense of adventure. The supernatural world is calling to you.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19): Capricorn, this month may bring with it a sense of unease and disquiet. Ghostly apparitions and eerie encounters may test your usual practical nature. Stay grounded and trust in your instincts as you navigate through the supernatural realm.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18): Aquarius, this month holds the promise of otherworldly encounters and ghostly presences. Keep an open mind and be prepared for the unexpected as you navigate through the shadowy realms of the supernatural. Your innovative nature may help you unlock the secrets of the spirit world.

Pisces (February 19-March 20): Pisces, the spirits are reaching out to you this month. Trust in your intuition and embrace the supernatural energy that surrounds you. You may find yourself drawn to haunted places and ghostly encounters. Embrace the unknown and let the spirits guide you on your journey.

-River Torres

Best Holiday Dessert Recipes

By Elizabeth Browngardt
Cub Reporter

From gingerbread cookies to peppermint bark, one of the best parts about the holidays and Christmas is the delicious desserts. During this time of the year, enjoying food brings family and friends together, sharing a sweet treat can spread holiday cheer.

The first recipe is gingerbread cookies. Gingerbread cookies are typically shaped like people and decorated with icing and candy. Some people even use them to make gingerbread houses. The ingredients you'll need are, 2 ¾ cups all-purpose flour, 1 teaspoon baking soda, 1 teaspoon ground ginger, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, ½ teaspoon ground cloves, ¼ teaspoon salt, ¾ cup unsalted butter, softened, 1 cup packed brown sugar, 1 large egg, ¼ cup molasses, icing and sprinkles for decoration.

First, preheat your oven to 350°F. Then, in a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and salt. In a separate large bowl, cream together the butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg and molasses until well combined. After, gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mixing well after each addition. Next, roll the dough into small balls and place them on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Then, bake for eight to ten minutes, or until the edges are lightly browned. Lastly, allow the cookies to cool completely before decorating with icing and sprinkles.

The second recipe is hot chocolate. A warm and comforting drink, hot chocolate is enjoyed all around the world in different ways and it's the perfect drink to get you through the cold winter months. You'll need 2 cups of whole milk, ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder, ¼ cup granulated sugar, ¼ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon vanilla extract, whipped cream, and marshmallows.

You start by whisking together the cocoa powder, sugar, and salt in a saucepan. Then, gradually whisk in the milk until the mixture is smooth. Place the saucepan over medium heat and heat the hot chocolate until it is hot but not boiling, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla extract. Lastly, pour the hot chocolate into mugs and top with whipped cream and marshmallows.

The final recipe combines the flavors of rich chocolate and refreshing peppermint. Peppermint bark is a great holiday treat or gift for family and friends. The ingredients you'll need are twelve ounces of chopped white chocolate, six to eight crushed candy canes, and sprinkles.

The first step is to line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Next, melt the white chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of simmering water, stirring until smooth. Pour the melted chocolate onto the prepared baking sheet, spreading it into an even layer. Afterwards, sprinkle the crushed candy canes over the melted chocolate, pressing them gently into the surface. Place the baking sheet in the refrigerator for about thirty minutes, or until the chocolate is firm. Lastly, once set, break the bark into pieces and enjoy.

Whether you have a sweet tooth or prefer something a little more than savory, there are many great holiday desserts to choose from. Making desserts brings people together and can create long lasting memories.

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Best Christmas Songs

By Taryn Vickers
Cub Photographer

The nights are getting colder and the Christmas decorations are up, meaning it's time for the holiday season. We all love to dive into the festivities by listening to some of our favorite holiday tunes. Whether they be pop, rock, or even slow jazz, many Christmas songs continue to be seasonal classics throughout the wait for St. Nick's arrival. Many of our favorite radio stations will also play a bunch of the classics we love and know by heart today. Here's a look at nine of the most popular Christmas songs to get your winter season warmed up.

First, we have Mariah Carey's 'All I Want For Christmas Is You', one of the most played holiday songs of all time. Even if you think it's a little too overplayed, you have to admit that it's pretty catchy. When thinking of what the holidays approaching sounds like, this song immediately comes to mind. Personally, it's one of my favorites, but that's because it sticks in my head like gumdrops on a gingerbread man from the moment I hear it. I In 2021 it was claimed Carey raked in more than $60 million from the track and still continues to profit from it today. It's just that popular!

Next in line, we have Wham!'s 'Last Christmas', another popular and groovy tune we hear on repeat during the holiday season. Interesting enough, despite the title of the song, it actually has very little to do with Christmas! It's mainly about a failed relationship, and coming face to face with them a year later. Only the phase 'Last Christmas' - when the relationship comes to a head - actually refers to the festive season. Despite its differing meaning, the song still grasped a hold of us all and delivered the holiday cheer, even if it wasn't intended to originally. Despite its fame, for 36 years, it was the best-selling UK single ever to not hit the top, with over two million copies sold. However, in 2017, it reached number two (becoming its highest peak). Later, many George Michael fans began campaigning for it to get the Christmas Number One in tribute to the singer, after his death on Christmas Day in 2016.

Third up, we have 'White Christmas' by Bing Crosby. Year after year, artists and songwriters have been trying to go one better than Bing Crosby. His recording of "White Christmas" is ubiquitous and along the way has become the biggest-selling single of all time, racking up sales of 50 million in the process. With the song being a frequent play on the radio, it is also a timeless classic in the movie *White Christmas* as well, one of the top Christmas movies starring Bing Crosby, Rosemary Clooney, Danny Kaye, and Vera-Ellen. This slower song is the perfect tune to cozy up on the couch with and enjoy in the background while reading your favorite novel.

Fourth on the list is 'Feliz Navidad' by Jose Feliciano, one of the most classic holiday earworms out there. While this song is just two phrases of holiday cheer in English and Spanish repeated over and over for three minutes, it's a catchy classic that incorporates different cultures into the classic American Christmas culture like Feliciano's, that being Puerto Rican. More upbeat, "Feliz Navidad" will have you dancing to the strumming of the guitar and spinning to the trumpets.

For our fifth song, we'll be taking a look at 'Baby, It's Cold Outside' by Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald. These two talented singers actually made a whole Christmas album together, but this song by far was their greatest hit within it. The call and response song is a jump between love and lust alluding to a cozy and romantic winter season. Whether you're lounging in a cafe with a peppermint mocha, or taking a walk out in the chilly air with your nose tucked into your scarf, this song is perfect to listen to. Since it's slower, a little waltz to it is better suited than an all out disco party if you were planning on playing it at an event.

Sixth calls for a motown classic, 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town' by the Jackson 5. This fun and upbeat song is perfect for a festive and full of life holiday get together. Compared to the other songs listed, this soul train song is fast and upbeat, perfect for if you're having a large Christmas dinner with all the uncles, aunts, and cousins. The Jackson 5 have many popular songs, with this being their first Christmas album and their fourth studio album. From this group, we can recognize one of the five being Micheal Jackson, one of the most famous pop artists of all time, who had multiple untouched hits after hits. It's no surprise anything regarding his or his family's singing skills would be any less than great.

Seventh up comes to be 'Rockin Around the Christmas Tree', by Brenda Lee. When you think of any Christmas movie, this song is sure to be a part of its soundtrack. Lee's original version had sold over 25 million copies around the world with the fourth most digital downloads sold of any Christmas single. As talented as she was in spite of her adult voice, Lee recorded the song when she was only 13 years old. If that doesn't speak for itself, just this month Lee has released a music video to this song after years. Pretty impressive if you ask me! But regardless, her song is a timeless classic that's always sure to bring merry vibes to whatever winter activity you're doing.

Reaching our eighth song, 'Frosty the Snowman' by Cocteau Twins takes the spot. The classic story of *Frosty the Snowman* is made into a catchy song I'm sure we've all heard at least once during our childhood. While it's not as popular as some of the other songs listed above, it's a winter classic. The song sold less than 5,000 copies when it was released, however it still reached high on the streaming charts when it grew more popular among radio stations. Maybe it's a hidden gem still waiting to be discovered by many or just isn't everyone's cup of tea.

For our ninth song, we'll be looking at 'Jingle Bell Rock' by Bobby Helms. Following its release in 1957, this rockabilly ditty topped the Christmas charts five years in a row, making it a veritable holiday classic even by the early '60s. Since this song has been around for sometime it should be somewhere on all of our holiday playlists. Today it retains a towering presence in the Christmas canon, as synonymous with the holiday as tinsel and paper crowns.

While there were many honorable mentions that couldn't fit on the list, there's handfuls of songs you might enjoy more like our runner ups 'Blue Christmas' by Elvis Presly, 'Santa Baby' by Ertha Kitt, and 'Sleigh Ride' by the Ronettes. After taking just a small glimpse at some of the most iconic Christmas songs in history, it's time for you to pick your favorites and make the ultimate holiday playlist.

Fun Christmas Activities

By Myah Pearl
Cub Reporter

It's officially the holiday season! People are rushing to prepare their plans as the day gets closer. Vacation plans are being set while stores are packed with gift givers. Friends and family are gathering together to celebrate and connect. It's the time of the year for everyone to drink hot cocoa and sit by the fireside. Of course, it wouldn't hurt to switch things up and find other fun ways to spend the holidays. Here are some fun activities to try with loved ones this holiday season.

First up, a gingerbread bake off! Loved ones can go against each other to make gingerbread cookies with the best design and one or more people can act as a judge if they do not wish to bake. Adding a theme is optional but could make a more fun competition. Just like in baking competitions, the game requires a judge (or judges) to sit aside while competitors create a cookie in a limited amount of time.

Another activity is Secret Santa, but with a twist. In this version of the game, instead of being assigned a gift each person will buy a gift that is not meant for a specific person and players will have to guess who bought what for a chance to win that gift. Once a player has guessed correctly they can no longer participate to ensure that everyone wins something. It is recommended to play this game with a large group to make it more challenging.

For those who enjoy something more physical, a fun activity would be a Christmas lip sync battle. Friends and family will have to go up against one another to put on the best performance while lip syncing to a Christmas song. To make things more interesting, competitors will have to dress up, use props, and come up with choreography.

Another fun activity to do is decorating a loved one. People can split into groups and turn someone into a human Christmas tree. The challenge is to create the best tree in a certain amount of time.

For the chocolate fanatics, try making Christmas-themed hot cocoa balls.

Finally, Christmas charades is a fun activity to do with the family. There are a variety of topics to act in such as Christmas movies, characters, and songs.

Christmas only comes around once a year. Make sure to make every year memorable and don't be afraid to try something new!

Best Holiday Specials

By Josie Robinson
Cub Reporter

While SoCal doesn't receive the joys of winter's "first snow," nor the activities that come with it, such as slay rides, snowmen and snow ball fights, we can still get a sliver of what colder climates have to offer, only they're on our TV screens, not outside our windows. Every year, holiday specials show up on our screens around this time of year to bring more life and joy into the holiday season, and it wouldn't be the same without them. Here are some of the best holiday specials to watch this season and where to find them!

One cannot go into the Christmas season without watching the *Charlie Brown Christmas Special* at least once. As much as it is an iconic classic, it can most simply be put as a wholesome getaway into childhood wonder and joy. The 30 minute segment has been on TV screens since the 60's and has thus sprinkled nostalgia and a bit of snow into our lives for decades. As it has been broad casted across the country since its release, Apple TV now allows people to watch it whenever they please, and not have to worry about catching it before it's too late. The animation brings to life Charles Shulz's beloved characters and is perfect for all ages.

Another classic has to be the Muppets rendition of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol.* The show perfectly captures the message of the story, while also bringing in the humor the Muppets exude in every space they occupy. The show is extraordinarily funny; however, they are able to remain serious whenever the time calls upon it. While the show is the first project done without Jim Henson, Steve Whitmire who plays Kermit and Jim Henson's son/director Brian Henson, do an amazing job living up to his (and The Muppets') legacy. The show isn't deprived of The Muppets famous show tunes or the guest star they bring in for every segment, this time featuring Micheal Caine as Ebenezer Scrooge. The show is about an hour and a half long and can be found on Disney +.

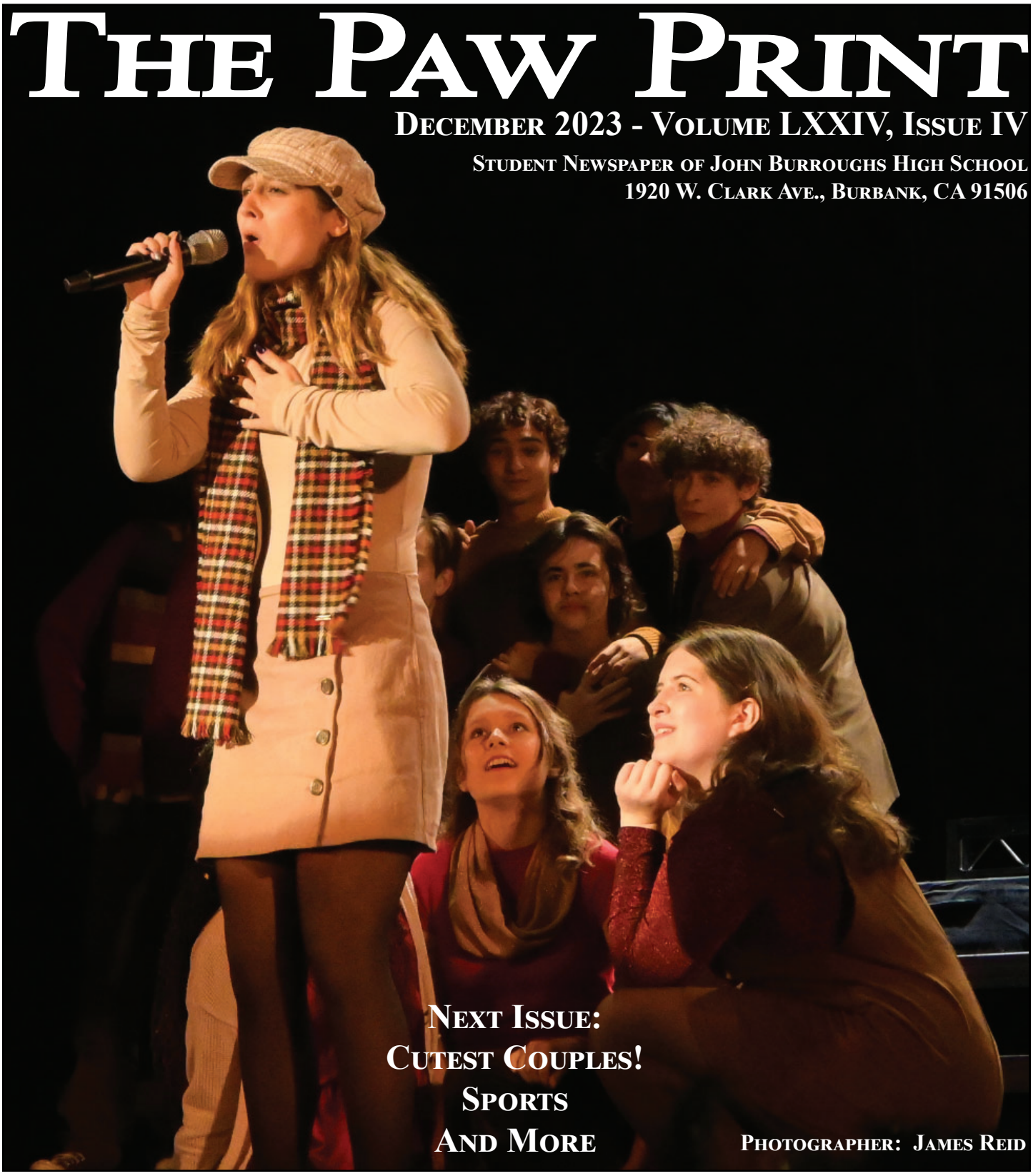
Who could forget Community's holiday specials, as they always find a way to bring any weirdly wholesome humor into the holiday season; however, none of them truly takes the cake as much as "Abed's Uncontrollable Christmas." The show follows the gang who are all celebrating the holidays differently, before they suddenly become stop motion animation. As they go through the episode trying to become human again, they are tasked with finding the true "meaning of Christmas," even though only one of them celebrates it. While the show is goofy, it does allow audiences and the characters to see that the joys of the holidays don't derive from one thing, and that you can find happiness in many places. The show is on Netflix, and if you want to see more wacky interpretations of the holiday, they have several more specials.

Lastly, New Girl's holiday episode "The 23rd," is my personal favorite. The episode follows the usually close knit characters all celebrating the holidays separately. As the show progresses, we are met with their emotional separation, before they all jump over hurdles to get back to each other in order to see "Candy Cane Lane," a neighborhood known for their decorations. The special is funny and emotional, since it's the characters (and the audiences) first holidays "together." The show itself is on Hulu, and I highly recommend a watch, as the episode itself isn't entirely about Christmas, and more so about friendship and family.

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