

GREEN TREE TIMES

VOL. 28, NO. 48 • DECEMBER 2022

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The Best Movies to Watch in December

lis•ti•cle , *noun* - an article consisting of a series of items presented as a list. (*Merriam-Webster*)



Just recently, which could mean I am way behind the curve, I was watching a series, aimed at a younger, 20 something crowd, on HBO and heard the term listicle. My common sense told me it was a list of some type, but a formal term for that? I didn't know that was a thing. My curiosity was piqued. I did some research and found that what I have been doing for years is actually a common trend in writing and especially blog posts.

Some of the reasons are because they are quick and easy to read, which

keeps in pace with the way people get their information these days. They are also easy to write. There's not much creativity needed and a listicle is like a one stop shop for information on a certain subject.

Well, I've decided to try my hand at a listicle for the best movies to watch this December. This is all based on opinion and research, so use it as a guide, but to each their own, if a movie I recommended is not to your liking!

I'll start with family friendly films that most will love.

"It's a Wonderful Life" - This age-

less movie is one that never fails and is full of hope and a heartwarming message about life.

"Miracle on 34th Street" - A Christmas comedy that proves Santa is real for any skeptics out there.

"The Polar Express" - An animated film of adventure and learning to believe.

"A Christmas Story" - a nostalgic remembrance of a childhood Christmas that is worth watching each year.

"Elf" - a movie that will make you laugh, cry, and quote lines for years to come.

"National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" - a madcap family Christmas.

Next, you can't get through the holidays without a good rom-com.

"Love Actually" - The ultimate romantic comedy with intertwined stories and the common theme of love.

"Four Christmases" - It's Reese Witherspoon and Vince Vaughn - need I say more? Fun and funny!

"The Holiday" - Two women swap homes after break ups and find romance in unexpected places.

"Happiest Season" - A rom-com about being true to yourself, and wanting your family's acceptance.

"The Family Man" - A modern spin on seeing your life if you would have made one different decision.

"Just Friends" - Ryan Reynolds does the perfect glam up to get the girl.

Lastly, some New Years Eve flicks to get in before 2023.

"When Harry Met Sally" - dislike, then friends, then love, then you'll have to watch and see.

"New Year's Eve" - A Garry Marshall film of many lives interconnected on New Years Eve in New York filled with love and laughter.

"200 Cigarettes" - New York, 1981, a fun time with a great cast.

"About Time" - This move is about so much more than New Years Eve but that's where it starts and it's an absolute favorite!

There are many more but my listicle would veer from the definition if I mention them all.

Consumers Can Help Small Businesses This Holiday Season

Small businesses continue to be the backbone of the North American business community. According to the career resource Zippia, there are 33.2 million small businesses in the United States. Those organizations employ around 62 million people.

Despite the prevalence of small businesses and the abundance of people willing to become entrepreneurs, 20 percent of these firms fail within the first year, and only 55 percent survive five years or more, says Zippia. The COVID-19 pandemic was particularly harsh on small businesses. However, many of them survived through digitization that they plan to continue to utilize even when the pandemic is long gone.

Maintaining a small business through economic highs and lows and other issues often comes down to

customer involvement. Consumers are the driving forces behind the success of small businesses. There are some effective ways for consumers to help small businesses grow.

Make a choice to shop local. The "Shop Local" movement has been around for awhile but remains as relevant as ever. Shopping local means becoming repeat patrons at the independent businesses that comprise Main Street as opposed to the chain stores that dominate strip malls.

After shopping or eating at a local establishment, share your experience on social media. This can be a great way to spread the word about businesses you like and point out particular examples why you shop there. Utilizing social media platforms to highlight the positive attributes of a business can help that business grow.

When ordering food, call directly to the local restaurants for take-out orders. Those ubiquitous third-party food delivery services may be convenient, but businesses have to share the profit from your purchase with the delivery service, cutting into their bottom lines. Pick up your order or rely on the restaurants' own delivery teams.

Intentionally engage with local businesses online. Complicated algorithms and other factors determine how a business' website or social media page gets seen by the public. You can help things along by liking pages, visiting the website frequently and sharing any posts.

Spread the word by speaking about a business in person. When out and about, whether you're dining with friends or chatting with a stranger, try to push and recommend businesses you support. If someone compliments

your lawn, shoes or haircut, mention the businesses that did the work or sold you the products.

When visiting a local business, suggest opportunities for exposure. If you know about a school or organization looking for vendors, make the suggestion to the local business. They may get new customers from participating in the event.

Small businesses are driving forces in the economy. Consumers can do their part to keep them thriving and profitable.



MUSINGS...HOLD THE WHOLE



Editor's Note: Sharon Eakes is a personal and executive coach, who is a regular columnist for our paper as well as for the Huffington Post. She is the author of Fresh Views on Resilient Living. She may be reached by calling 412-741-1709 or email Sharon @hopellc.com.

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*"The deeper that sorrow carves into your being,
the more joy you can contain."*

~Khalil Gibran

Are you carrying around a load of sadness, but not much joy? Many people are. They talk about being busy, too busy, relentlessly pressured and busy. There are complex problems in the air: politics, climate change, inflation to name three. There is little fun.

A client told me this week that the closest she comes to joy is sitting watching TV, and it neither relaxes nor brings her joy. I asked what might bring her joy. She said "to have the time and presence to stop in wonder at a red maple leaf fluttering in an odd rhythm to the ground."

Last night my longtime friend Kathy called to talk. She recently lost her partner to liver cancer, much too quickly. Then she had some serious health issues. She described the details of both, and I sat in sadness with her. My heart broke with hers.

She asked about me. I had happy news to share – a quirky new friendship that is bringing me joy.

Together we held both sorrow and joy. I am happy our rich relationship allows us to share both the depths of our sadness and the sparks of our joy.

It is freeing to learn that sadness and joy aren't mutually exclusive. Some say you can only have one at a time. I don't believe that. I think we carry around both sadness and joy all the time. The enjoyment does not dishonor the sorrow. In fact, learning to hold them both, balancing them inside, may be the fullest, most satisfying way to live.

A friend put it this way:

stop striving to maximize pleasure and minimize pain
strive for wholeness instead
hold the joy...

bask in the awe and wonder
with gratitude for being alive and aware

then let your heart break wide open,
over and over again until it no longer closes

and hold the sorrow...

accept that pain and sorrow are inevitable,
that this is the flip side of joy

then let your heart break wide open,
over and over again until it no longer closes

balance your attention in this wholeness ...

but don't let the joy blind you,
outshining the suffering of the world

nor the sorrow overwhelm you,
chasing you into distraction or depression

hold them both – the joy and the sorrow – in a heart broken wide open,
and pour your gifts into the world...

COACHING QUESTIONS:

1. How do you carry sorrow inside you?
2. How do you experience joy in your life?
3. How do you balance these seeming opposites to have a meaningful life?



GREEN TREE TIMES

Available Monthly

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Safe Food Practices Can Help Prevent Foodborne Illness This Holiday Season



Jayesh Gosai, M.D.

This is the time of year where traditions are celebrated and family and friends gather for plenty of food and holiday “cheer.” The hectic holiday party planning should include some thought to foodborne illness and prevention. Foodborne illness is anything but fun and it can actually turn deadly.

Each year, an estimated 48 million people in the United States experience a foodborne illness. Food or drink contamination causes more than 3,000 deaths in the United States annually.

Foodborne illnesses are infections or irritations of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract caused by food or beverages that contain harmful bacteria, parasites, viruses, or chemicals. Common symptoms of foodborne illnesses include vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, and chills.

Acute symptoms can start anywhere from hours to days after contaminated food or drinks are consumed. Symptoms come on suddenly and last a short time. Most people recover on their own without treatment. But foodborne illness can be severe and even life-threatening to anyone, especially those most at risk, such as older adults, infants, young children, pregnant women, people with cancer or an illness that weakens the immune system and people who take medicines that suppress the immune system.

A common side effect of the illness is dehydration which can be dangerous on its own. A few signs of dehydration include excessive thirst, dry mouth, dizziness/lightheadedness, confusion, headache, sleepiness, decreased urine output, and low blood pressure. If you or a family member becomes ill, be sure to drink fluids – water, juice and replenishing sports drinks. Even a couple teaspoons every half hour. If the illness lasts longer than 24 hours, or if there are signs of dehydration, visit your doctor, Urgent Care Center or hospital emergency room.

Combating bacteria, viruses, parasites, and other contaminants in our food supply is a high priority for the Food and Drug Administration. But consumers have a role to play, too, especially when it comes to safe food-handling practices in the home. The FDA recommends four safe food practices.

The first rule of safe food preparation in the home is to keep everything **clean**. Wash hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling any food. Wash food-contact surfaces (cutting boards, dishes, utensils, countertops) with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item and before going on to the next item. Rinse fruits and vegetables thoroughly under cool running water and use a produce brush to remove surface dirt. Do not rinse raw meat and poultry before cooking to stop bacteria from spreading to areas around the sink and countertops.

Secondly, keep things **separate**. Bacteria can easily spread from one food to another (cross-contamination). Keep raw eggs, meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices away from foods that won't be cooked. Keep items separated in the grocery cart when shopping, when storing in the refrigerator at home, and while preparing meals. Consider using one cutting board only for foods that will be cooked and another one for raw fruits, vegetables and cheeses.

The next very important step is **proper cooking**. Food needs to be cooked thoroughly at a high enough internal temperature to kill harmful bacteria. Use a food thermometer to make sure meat, poultry, and fish are cooked to a safe internal temperature. To check insert a food thermometer into the thickest part of the meat. The meat is safe

when the temperature reaches the recommended temperature. Find the temperature for various foods at foodsafety.gov. Bring sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil when reheating. Cook eggs until the yolk and white are firm. When making your own eggnog or other recipe calling for raw eggs, use pasteurized shell eggs, liquid or frozen pasteurized egg products, or powdered egg whites. Don't eat uncooked cookie dough, which may contain raw eggs.

Lastly, **storing foods** in a cool environment is extremely important. Harmful bacteria grow rapidly at room temperature. Refrigerate food in a timely manner. Refrigerate leftovers and take-out foods—and any type of food that should be refrigerated—within two hours. That includes pies. Set your refrigerator at or below 40° F and the freezer at 0° F. Check both periodically with an appliance thermometer. Never defrost food at room temperature. Food can be defrosted safely in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave. Food thawed in cold water or in the microwave should be cooked immediately. Allow the correct amount of time to properly thaw food. For example, a 20 pound turkey needs four to five days to thaw completely when thawed in the refrigerator. When in doubt, throw it out. Do not taste or keep food that looks or smells questionable. Leftovers should be used within three to four days.

Community News and Events

The Nutcracker, by the Carnegie Performing Arts Center, will perform at the Andrew Carnegie Music Hall, 300 Beechwood Avenue in Carnegie. Performances will be on Sat., Dec. 10 and 17 at 7 p.m., and Sun., Dec. 11 and 18 at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$22 for adults and \$20 for students and seniors and are available at the door or on line through the website. For more information please contact the Carnegie Performing Arts Center at (412) 279-8887 or access www.carnegieperformingartscenter.com.

The Association of University People (AUP) is inviting singles, age 50 and older, who are 4-year college graduates, to join them for fun and meet new people. They have monthly dinners, meet at various social spots, gatherings, concerts, picnics, and wine tastings. Interested individuals are welcome to attend any of their activities. December has a Happy Hour at Walnut Grill (Bethel Park) on Dec. 2, and a Dinner at Bella's on Fort Couch, Dec. 20. If interested call 412-862-7861.

Green Tree Light Up Night, Sat., Dec. 3, 5-7 p.m. at Green Tree Municipal Center. Lighting of tree, Santa and Mrs. Claus will visit, Ice carving, Mike the Balloon Guy, Train Display, Hot Dogs, S'Mores Table and more!

SAVE THE DATE - BINGO at Tiffany's V on Sun., Jan. 22, at 1 p.m. This event is sponsored by St. Philip Parish. To order tickets, send mail request and payment to Dorothy, Administrative Office, 114 Berry Street, Pittsburgh, 15205.



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The Fishin' Hole



Sam Hall

The time has come to head to Erie by my way of thinking. The colder temperatures will thin out the crowds a little bit so you have some room to fish. Still, don't be shy about taking a walk away from the main parking spots on any of the Erie tributaries you might find yourself fishing. The steelhead find their way, so can you.

Keep a low profile. In other words, don't stand so your shadow is being cast across the stream, don't stomp through the big holes, walk slowly, carefully and quietly. Single eggs, egg sacs, or egg patterns have been hot lately, along with the always reliable emerald shiners. The most important thing about fishing the tribs is your drift. It is also the most difficult thing to understand and master.

There is no substitute for experience with regard to learning the drift, but do your best to adjust your weight distribution so your bait looks to be moving as naturally as possible as it nears fish. Watch the guys that are catching fish, note the amount of weight they have and how it is dispersed on that given day. If you are having

trouble figuring it out, ask someone you have witnessed having success. Wait until they are taking a break for a cup of coffee or re-tying their line and just say "Hi, I am new to this and I see you catching. Can you show me what you are doing?" Most guys, in the 98% range I would venture, will love the fact that you asked and be excited to help. If you get one of the other 2% then that's a sign it's not the day for you to play the lottery and just move to the next guy.

Walleye on the rivers closer to home are taking live minnows on jigs. Fish slow and low and be aware sometimes the bite can be extremely lite. The fish will gently hold the minnow and actually turn it around inside their mouth before committing. Cold water fishing takes commitment, patience, and alertness from the fisherman to produce success.

The water is getting colder and the calendar has turned to December, time to make sure the fisher-person on your holiday gift buying list is fully out-fitted, or in my case, time to make sure my wife knows what I need, or more accurately, want. Sometimes you have to forget about being subtle and just come right out and say, "Oh my, I think my fishing reel has caught it's final fish! I guess I will just have to remember to pick up a (insert the exact name and specific size and type of reel you want here) before I head out fishing next time." Another approach that has worked for me is leaving the Cabela's website open on the computer with a full cart of all of the things that I would love to receive! Terminal tackle, (hooks, line, sinkers, lures) always make for fabulous stocking stuffers for the outdoors-person in your life and they have the added coolness of not being the "same old thing".

Before I go, a reminder that the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission stocked Brady's Run in Beaver and North Park Lake with a fresh batch of trout two weeks ago and the cold temps will allow you a lot of room to fish there in December. Dress warm and use meal worms, red worms and salmon eggs. Also, if you like to chase those stockies there are still loads in both Canonsburg Lake and Raccoon.

From my family to yours, we wish everyone of you the very Best of the Holiday Season, wrap yourselves in the warmth of the love of your friends and family, and keep those lines TIGHT!

Send me your pictures and stories to samdhall@comcast.net.

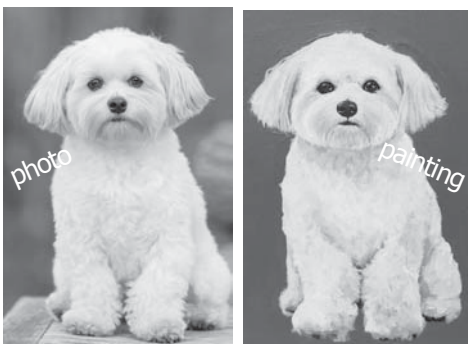


Sarah Knisely with a beautiful Steelhead from Lake Erie. Check out her Instagram at [the.girl.that.fishes](https://www.instagram.com/the.girl.that.fishes) - you'll see some amazing catches.

~photo courtesy of Sarah Knisely

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librarian

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Fun and Games for Kids

(Answers on back page)



Festive Fun Facts

"Jingle Bells" holds the Guinness World Record for being the first song played in space. It was played by the crew of NASA's Gemini 6A space flight on December 16, 1965.

Source: Guinness World Records

The 2021 **Rockefeller Center Christmas tree** was decorated with more than 50,000 lights and a 900-pound star.

Source: ABC News

The **largest gingerbread house** on record was constructed at Bryan, Texas in 2013. It was 60 ft (18.28 m) long, 42 ft (12.8 m) wide and 10.1 ft (3.07 m) tall at its highest point.

Source: Guinness World Records

Find the 10 differences between the pictures below.



Unscramble the Holiday Words

EERENVRGE _____

OHDRPLU _____

MEHTHBELHE _____

GJNIEL LLBSE _____

STCMSARIH KSIEOCO _____

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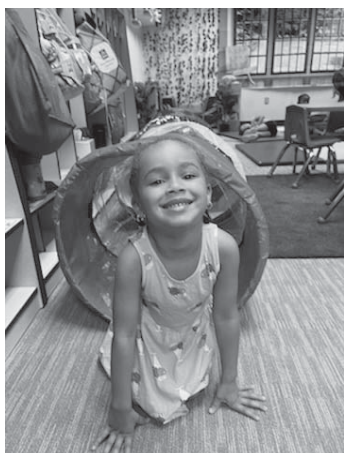
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