

12/15/2023

When I say I can recite almost all the lines to several Christmas movies, I am exaggerating only slightly. Elf, Christmas Vacation, and Love Actually all have been played at my house multiple times since the beginning of the month, and I can't wait to start the marathon of A Christmas Story at 8 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

As an aside, my teammates and I love the movie Elf so much that we decorated our space for the annual Christmas competition with life-size cutouts of Buddy and other characters from the movie. We threw in some actual spaghetti topped with Pop Tarts and maple syrup, as well as other adornments representative of "elf culture." We were feeling pretty darn confident going into the voting for the best team decoration. Then, the Tribunal – the Tribunal! – came out of nowhere with an uncanny recreation of the crime scene where Grandma Got Runover by a Reindeer. And the Communications Office created an entire mock issue of the Catholic Virginian with headlines and stories such as "I.T. Department Clicks on Spam E-Mail." All I can say is, well-done my first-floor friends, and congratulations on your prizes!

Anyway, back to Christmas movies. Most of them at their heart have a positive message. Even Christmas Vacation with all its absurdity is about family, generosity, and the optimism of the Christmas spirit.

Last Sunday, Moose woke me up extra early, so we went downstairs so we wouldn't disturb anyone else. I turned on the TV to find a movie I had never seen, much less heard of. It was called Santa Claus (no extra points for creativity) from 1985, and a scene with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow was playing in which Moore, playing an elf, says, "If you give extra kisses, you get bigger hugs." I am not one for corny B-movie quotes, but that one stuck with me. I don't know anyone right now who couldn't use a bigger hug.

I hope you all continue to have a blessed Advent season.

Margaret

**Margaret Keightley**

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