



December Edition

Cedar Chips

Fun Things to do During the Winter

By Liam C.

Unfortunately, COVID has gotten worse, so lockdown has been extended, but that doesn't mean there's nothing to enjoy during the winter of 2020-2021. There are still plenty of things to do.

If you celebrate Christmas, you can decorate the front of your house with seasonal lights or inflatables. There's many different kinds of decorations, such as Christmas lights, inflatable decorations, and many other things. You could also get gifts and wrap them for your friends and/or family if you want to. It would make their day.

If there's a snowy day, you can sled down a hill or a sledding place. You can get a sled at Target. Ice skating is also an option to do. Some local skiing places just two hours away are Wintergreen, Ski Liberty, and Massanutten. Skiing could be expensive, unlike sledding, since you just need to find a snowy hill and you can make a simple sled board from cardboard or a plank unless you want to buy a real one.

Not only can you decorate the outside of your house, you can also decorate the inside with some lights and a Christmas tree. Just decorate the tree with any ornaments and something on top, and wrap it in lights. After all that, You can just relax, set up a cozy fire in the fireplace, maybe cook some s'mores and watch any of your favorite Christmas movies, which I have conveniently listed in the Top 10 elsewhere in this issue.

Thank you for reading this and happy holidays!

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Happy Hanukkah!

By Avi W.



Hanukkah is from December 10 - December 18 this year. As a Jewish person, I'm very excited! However, there are definitely some not-so-great things about the holiday season if you aren't Christian and only celebrate Christmas.

Not only this, there are also holidays from other religions and ethnicities that aren't mentioned as often, or aren't brought up at all such as Kwanzaa, Diwali, Ōmisoka, Mawlid el-Nabi (depending on the year), Zarathosht No-Diso, Bodhi Day, Winter Solstice/Yule, and many more. As much as I would like to talk more about these, I do not feel I could do the justice each deserves. Because of this, I will focus on my own personal experiences.

Hanukkah is such a fun holiday. There's giving and receiving presents (depending on where in the world you live), eating latkes and jelly doughnuts, playing dreidel, learning about your culture, and much more. But did you know Hanukkah isn't an important Jewish holiday? The only reason it is celebrated as much as it is in primarily Christian countries is that it's around Christmas! The Jewish holidays viewed as most important are Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Passover, and Shavuot. However, most goyim (non-Jewish people) aren't aware of these holidays, because the scale of their celebration has nothing to do with Christianity.

While Hanukkah is celebrated by many, and should not be excluded around the holidays, one can be a better ally to the Jewish community by learning more about the culture and its other holidays. It is important to listen to people talking about their different backgrounds, and the winter holidays are a great reminder of this. That way, when you wish someone "happy holidays" you truly mean all of them.

Happy holidays, everyone!

Meet The Cast of A New Coming of Age Film: Egghead & Twinkie

by Cat S.

Egghead & Twinkie is a film written and directed by Sarah Holland. Originally, it was a short film starring Sabrina Jieafa as Twinkie and Louis Tomeo as Egghead. In order to fund the feature film, Holland launched a crowdfunding page on October 16 and reached 10% of the goal before the livestream even ended.

The short film introduces the main characters, Sabrina Jieafa as Twinkie and Louis Tomeo as Egghead. Twinkie is a high school student who is coming to terms with her sexuality, and Egghead is her best friend who happens to be in love with her. When her parents refuse to accept her, she asks Egghead to go on a road trip with her, and the adventure will be explored in the feature film. I was lucky to talk to the cast and crew recently, and interview them about the upcoming film.

Q: What inspired you to want to be in *Egghead & Twinkie*?

A (from Louis/Egghead): “Well, so many things stood out to me...This one stood out. It was a female director, super young cast, everything was progressive. The whole idea is much different, it was a breath of fresh air when I saw it. This is so better than anything going on anywhere else. There was a lot of potential in a lot of the variables. That was probably the biggest thing.”

A (From Sabrina/Twinkie): “You don’t come across this a lot in this industry, where it kind of fits you like a glove. I was like, this was written about me. So when I read the project, immediately I had to do this, there was no question about it.”

A (From Asahi/Jess): “I read it, and it’s really hard...especially for Asian actors and actresses. to come across a role that feels like it fits you, without it feeling racist, in a way. And I [thought] “Wow, this is really interesting” and then I did a little research and I [thought] “I want to be a part of this so bad.”

A (From Maihua/B.D.): “You know a character that somehow connects with you, even if it’s not your everyday self? It’s just like how crazy similar me and B.D. were. Growing up, I personally related more to people on TV screens then I did in real life. I think this film can help a lot of younger people and especially my fans who are going to watch it.”

Q: What message do you hope the audience will gain from *Egghead & Twinkie*?

A (From Maihua/B.D.): “Everyone has a different coming out story. But with this one, it seems normalized, because it’s not like that’s not the whole point of the movie. Twinkie’s whole essence isn’t she’s gay, it’s a lot more.”

A (From Asahi/Jess): “Yeah, I think the overarching message would be just to be yourself, because that’s all that you have.”

A (From Louis/Egghead): “A lot can be listened to and heard when you just pay attention to [others.] There is probably a lesson that every character in this movie has to learn at some point. That what makes you, *you*, rather than one thing plastered on you like “nerd” or “gay” that’s not a character trait, it’s just something about you that you are. So there is a lot that can be listened to and respected when you just communicate.”

A (From Sabrina/Twinkie): “You know what, I’ve always loved a story about friendship and about acceptance, whether that be with your sexual orientation or the color of your skin or whatever you identify as. And I want people to emphasize and relate to Twinkie, because I feel like she does have a really universal character type. Hopefully they can see her and not feel so alone and just get that message of ‘everybody’s going through something’.”



It was really fun to virtually interview the cast of *Egghead & Twinkie*.



An Above Average Animal

By David R.

One of humanity's most important questions... What is the dopes animal? Today I am here to make a case for second place, because apes are clearly the top dog.

The moose is easily a top five animal, and I think it is tragic that they are never included in the discussion. Clearly they are not above apes or crabs, but they have a strong case for the top five. I am here to make that case.

First off, they are massive. They can weigh as much as 1500 pounds and grow to be 6 foot 9. That is so tight. Built like tanks, you best stay away if you see one in the wild. Sadly, they are mostly found in Canada, so your odds of coming across one are extremely low. It is also sad for the moose, as they have to live in Canada.

Put into a one on one scenario with a human, the moose would absolutely rock anyone. I can see a human beating a crab and most other animals, but the moose does not abide. It is well known that you are better off swerving off the road than hitting that absolute tank of an animal.

They are also extremely fast. Their top speed is 35 mph, which is nuts considering they are huge. Probably one of the scariest things you can see in the wild is that absolute massive beast charging you. But once again, you don't have to fear, as they have been exiled to Canada.

All in all, moose are tight and it's about gosh darn time they get the respect they deserve.



Top 10 Things to do on New Year's Eve

1. Watch the ball drop on TV
2. Wear party hats
3. Play boardgames with family
4. Go outside
5. Dance to music
6. Destroy a model of 2020
7. Watch a movie
8. Celebrate with dinner
9. Bake cookies
10. Yell



Top 10 Apes/Monkeys

By David R.

1. chimpanzee
2. gorilla
3. proboscis monkey
4. orangutan
5. spider monkey
6. howler monkey
7. gibbon
8. mandrill
9. baboon
10. gelada

The Fascinating (Summarized) History of Agriculture

By Ian A.



A few weeks ago, millions of Americans piled heaps of stuffing, casserole, cranberries, and the like onto hopelessly unprepared paper plates in celebration of Thanksgiving. If you were among those partaking in the festivities, you may have wondered what exactly it took to get each ingredient together in one place, and for that to happen in millions of homes across the country.

Nowadays agriculture, specifically the cultivation of crops, is largely an industrial process; highly automated and optimized. This was, of course, not always the case, though it is hard to imagine such a time from a modern food-secure perspective. In fact, at one point- roughly 15-20,000 years ago- humans scarcely farmed at all, living a nomadic “hunter-gatherer” lifestyle following herds of animals and eating foraged plants. This period of time before humans transitioned to the sedentary lifestyle is called the “Paleolithic” age, and is marked in the archaeological record with flint, bone, and wood hunting implements.

The history of growing and harvesting plants is rich and complicated, so it’s best to focus on one specific type of produce: grains. Wheat, barley, corn, and rice are some examples of this diverse food group, which has been utilized by humans for around 80,000 years. One of the most prolific grains, wheat, began as humble wild grass that grew along river banks, and yielded small amounts of food. It’s possible that a contemporary farmer would not be able to recognize early crops such as these, with their short stalks and tiny kernels, though they were eaten in much the same way.

So how did we get the lofty golden crop we see today? Well, it has to do with genetics. Over the millenia, generations of farmers selected the largest and highest quality grains from their harvest to replant, so that the next yield would be more bountiful. Of course, this was a slow process, as it takes quite some time for the desirable genes to become dominant in the gene pool. To this day, we reap the benefits of that arduous work, which is certainly something for which we should be grateful.

If such a process took so long, and a population was not immediately rewarded, then what drove humans to farm in the first place? The reason is not exactly clear, but there is consensus amongst the scientific community about a few factors that undoubtedly contributed.

Firstly, it’s important to note that humankind has seen a monumental amount of development within the last 20,000 years. This is pertinent because, geologically, that isn’t a very long amount of time, meaning not a whole lot about the Earth has changed since the time of the first farmers. Often, the progression of our species depended on the environment in which we lived, be it cold or hot. So when, for instance, glaciers retreat (as they did 19,000 years ago) large amounts of land opened up, and the climate became much more hospitable. The northern hemisphere experienced much movement over the course of homo-sapien inhabitance, resulting in periods of warmth, where people could settle down in small riverside villages, only for glaciation to take place again, driving them back to a nomadic, meat based lifestyle.

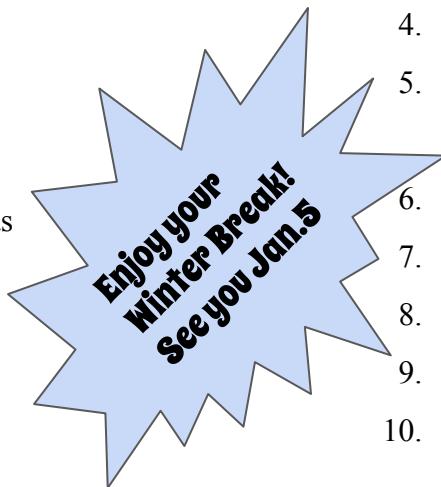
The aforementioned deglaciation that began 19,000 years ago, sped up roughly 4,000 years later, and continues to this day, though obviously exacerbated by humans. Arable (farmable) land was now available from the Western edge of Ireland, to the Yellow River in China. Needless to say, humans capitalized quickly, and now we are here today, with technology unimaginable to the people of the Paleolithic era.

Top 10 Christmas Movies

By Liam C.

There are so many movies to choose from to watch during a nice cold day or night. Here, I will list 10 popular movies or movies I would enjoy watching during a snowy evening. If it even snows this year. :(

- Home Alone
- A Christmas Story
- Edward Scissorhands
- Nightmare before Christmas
- Elf
- How the Grinch Stole Christmas
- Die Hard
- Miracle on 34th Street
- It's A Wonderful Life
- The Santa Clause



Top 10 Christmas Treats

By Cat S.

- Candy Cane
- Gingerbread Cookies
- Sugar Cookies
- Peppermint Bark
- Brownies
- Chocolate Gingerbread
- Ornament Cookies
- Peppermint Cookies
- Pretzel Bites
- Eggnog Cookies



Cartoons to Watch Over Break

By Avi W.

Kid Shows

1. Steven Universe
 2. Adventure Time
 3. Gravity Falls
 4. Avatar: the Last Airbender
 5. Avatar: Legend of Korra
- ## Teen and Adult Shows
6. The Midnight Gospel
 7. Bob's Burgers
 8. Daria
 9. Clone High
 10. Space Ghost Coast to Coast



Top 10 Best Big Brain Games

By Ian A.

- 1.) Crusader Kings III
- 2.) Sid Meier's Civilization Series
- 3.) Cities: Skylines
- 4.) Rise of Nations
- 5.) Sudoku
- 6.) Faster than Light
- 7.) Mount & Blade: Warband
- 8.) Bloons Tower Defense 6
- 9.) Imperator: Rome
- 10.) Age of Empires



Winter Words

E Y B J L N T I S E S D E U Y M T S L C N D W K A
 E Q B X I U V L S A H Z H M E T T A A Z N A W K R
 K Q A T S F K R C X M F J N A N I R T Y B C M D E
 S N O I T A R O C E D T O H E H E R D X T J N T T
 B H F C Z Q W E V F G R S S W T E N A M J U T S T
 B K S O T B R W C I A B E I N E A X C H E E R W U
 O E P D T K E N W H S R P I R C A H T V C R M D B
 C J P E N R D O I L P V W L U H A P B O A Y L R L
 P O O G F E I E N A C S W M E H C O G K I T E E I
 N H L G A G C U V E N I S U R W B Y L L O H Z I T
 X R I N K I P J E T P D Q U Q O B V T R Q Q B D Z
 K K Y O Z P P D L A H O N M T O Q J U Q D W Q E H
 S S P G Z C M S Y L O J Q N D V W K W R I I Q L E
 V Y M W I Z G Z T O Q O T W E M K R W J Z L D A U
 Z Y T T B H J F A C L J M C W M F Z L O W Q U S C
 Z X F F W T O U L O I E Y K S J S V F R O H C J K
 H B K C V G L F W H A T G V T S A L C O H J F N P
 E A Y G R E K P X C T B S N D E C E M B E R A U C
 L H N L E D Z M G V H A M F A M I L Y M K Y M W L
 O I S U L J G S U C N A O B O V R G R W R C W J G
 P Z G I K O G H N T P L U R A S R G W V N A O X I
 B P Q H W K O V A O V U O W A N N S K R M X W N H
 M M A B T P A B R A W E E A L X C B A J L F H N O
 L J L O I S C H F M Y G F Q M Y K F K P I E V U S
 L Y P X I B B G C M B W V Y D L P D A Q Z Q X H N

- Angel
- Candy Cane
- Charity
- Cheer
- Christmas
- Cider
- December
- Decorations
- Dreidel
- Eggnog
- Family
- Fun
- Ham
- Hanukkah
- Holly
- Hot Chocolate
- Kwanzaa
- Lights
- List
- Menorah
- Presents
- Santa
- Snow
- Tree
- Winter

