

ECHOS

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CHRISTMAS SPIRIT AT UCA

by: Lauren and Gianna

White snowflakes drifting from the sky, Christmas music echoing from classrooms, and festive lights glowing around the caf: the Christmas season is just starting at the UCA campus. UCA celebrates Christmas in many events and shows the spirit of the holiday through countless traditions.

From Christmas doors being decorated in the Ad building, to the exciting Christmas tree lighting, the UCA campus comes together during this time to worship Jesus and start the holiday season together.

All of these events and traditions create a spiritual environment and festive atmosphere that brings UCA together and creates a warm community within campus. Christmas at UCA is truly one of the best parts of the season and is a highlight of the school year that everyone can look forward to.

SECRET LIFE OF PETS, MORE LIKE SECRET LIFE OF THE FOREST

On Sunday December 5, UCA had their secret-forest-themed banquet. Couples were given the choice of four different activities. The two off campus activities they could choose from were falling on their butts ice skating or losing bets while bowling. If couples chose to stay on campus, they could enter the gingerbread-making competition, or strain their eyes watching a movie. Banquet started with the guys going to the girls' dorm to pick up their dates before waiting in the caf to find their seats. A pasta dinner was followed up by brownies and ice cream while everyone waited for the trivia to begin.

The main activity at banquet was the trivia game. One representative was sent up from four different tables and they were asked a random question from one of eight different topics. At any point when the questions were being read, the contestants could press their buzzer and give their answer. There were three different rounds, but in the end, Ryan Hughes at table 24 came out with the win. Everyone at his table received \$5 gift card to Taco Bell.

Photos were taken throughout the whole banquet with a secret forest background in the fireside room. Photos were taken by Mr. Maniscalco and uploaded to Teams on Monday. Most of the photos were taken after the trivia and before everyone went back to their respective dorms. The single people walked back to their dorms alone, while guys with dates walked their ladies back to



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“O CHRISTMAS TREE, O CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING”

On the evening of December 1, students and staff headed to ASB's annual Christmas tree lighting decked in



pajamas and ugly sweaters. To start off the event, Mrs. Melendy and Makenna Shirinzadeh led out in Christmas themed worship thoughts.

To close worship and lead up to the Christmas tree lighting, ASB gave out ornaments that people could either insert red or green pieces of paper into. The red slips of paper were for students or staff to write something they were grateful for, while the green was for writing a prayer request. After people hung their ornaments, everyone gathered around the Christmas tree, bask-

ing in its newly lit glow.

Afterward, snacks of popcorn, cookies, hot drinks, and other delicious treats were provided by the caf. Many people could be seen taking pictures around the Christmas tree or with Santa, who made a surprise appearance while being serenaded to Christmas music performed by several musically talented students.

One of the most memorable events of the evening was the duet of, “Baby It’s Cold Outside” by Pastor Sid and Pastor Fred. Their performance was kosher enough for UCA guidelines, as well as Grammy worthy. Dean Abrio and Dean Ballance also followed with a cover of, “All I Want for Christmas Is You” that would gain Mariah Carey’s approval. Both duets were met with laughter, cheers, and applause, and showcased the surprising musical talents of several staff members.

The staff and students left the caf ready for the Christmas season. Now, the only thing needed to increase the UCA campus’ Christmas spirit is a good dumping of snow.

CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST



Send any worship quotes or music recommendations to Gabrielle Townsend on Teams, I would love to hear your input!



A SNAPSHOT OF JESUS

“Us being here today leads to our purpose; there is never a point to give up. You WILL find your purpose.” ~ Madi Divers

“The almighty God chose to be a fertilized egg in a teenage girl’s uterus for you.” ~Mr. Gladding

“You embrace the Gift Giver (Jesus), and the gift of eternal life will be yours.” ~ Mr. Spano

HYPE, HYMNS & HALLELUJAHS

“Away In A Manger (Forever Amen)” by Phil Wickham



One of my all-time favorites, this song encompasses all the glory of Christmas.

“Heaven Everywhere” by Francesca Battistelli



The words of this simple song are a beautiful reminder of the reason for the season.

“‘GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST’ IS WHEN WE ARE BEING BROUGHT BACK TO ONENESS WITH HIM” ~ MR. GLADDING

The baby in the manger, angels, and a star... this Christmas story is heard every year. Though it manages to maintain a certain element of glory and awe, it can be easy to forget why baby Jesus in the manger is so important. Jesus came to the world to die, but in the years between, He did more than hide in a hole, waiting to get nailed to a tree.

Jesus lived life for people. The way He lived was like none other; He changed the lives of all those He encountered. The day Jesus was born was important because God came to Earth as a human equal. Jesus lived as one with humans, but more importantly, He lived one with God.

Through Jesus, we can be made whole and experience oneness never before possible. That is most definitely a reason to join the angels in praise.

BIBLE PROMISES: Luke 2:13-15, Romans 5:1-2, Hebrews 10:19-22, 1 John 5:20



Laura Wertz -
Music Editor



Jillian Petersen
- Entertainment
Editor

TOP 5 MOST OVERPLAYED CHRISTMAS SONGS EVER ACCORDING TO YOUR LOCAL SCROOGE

1. "All I Want for Christmas Is" *inhales* "YOUUUU" by Mariah Carey – Do I even need to explain this one?

2. "The Chipmunk Song" by the Chipmunks – I swear those "chipmunks" are going to haunt my nightmares.

3. "Mistletoe" by Justin Bieber – I think this guy is pretty overhyped in general. We don't need a Bieber Christmas. And don't "Shawty" me, Beebzy!

4. "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas" by Bing Crosby – Yes, I know it looks like Christmas. I didn't need your help to figure that one out, Sherlock.

5. "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" by Andy Williams – I'm pretty sure I hear this song every day in the month of December. Please, just give me a break.

JILLIAN'S GUIDE TO EVERY HALLMARK CHRISTMAS MOVIE EVER

- 1: EVERY MOVIE is exactly two hours long.
- 2: DECEMBER is not the only month that there are Christmas movies. Sometimes they like to get creative and do a 'Christmas in July' special.
- 3: The enemies to lovers trope is VERY COMMON
- 4: Hallmark likes to use actors that had their 'big break' when they were a child star at age five.
- 5: The Kristin Chenoweth Special is not very special.
- 6: The plot usually includes a business deal somewhere in there.
- 7: You can predict the ending WITHIN THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES.
- 8: The main character and their love interest usually have some form of medium-rare beef between them.
- 9: There are such things as Hallmark Mystery movies, Hallmark Summer Fun movies, and Hallmark Love is in the Air, But So Is Pollen movies.
- 10: The main characters can bond over a wide range of things, from, "Oh, your mom died when you were seven too?" and, "Oh my word apple pie is my FAVORITE TOO".
- 11: The Countdown to Christmas features actors from the movies acting like they're worth the extra interview (honey, there's a reason you're in a Hallmark film).
- 12: You can tell how far you are into the movie by the status of the main characters' relationship with each other.



HOLIDAY DOORS



Chaz Kastl -
Campus Life
Editor



Abigail Robert-
son - Dorm Life
Editor

As the seasons change all around us, the human tendency is to change too. We all begin wearing heavier and warmer clothes, drinking hot drinks, and oddly enough decorating door.

Here at UCA, people take door decorating to an extreme level. Today, I have highlighted a few of the doors: the craziest, the most thoughtful, and my personal favorite doors.

The most extreme case of door decorating

was the epic science snowball fight. Mrs. C and Mrs. M decorated their doors to mirror each other having a snowball fight in the hall.

The most thoughtful has to go to Mr. Maniscalco. His doors in the business office reflect some festive messages we should all remember.

Finally, my personal favorite. As a Star Wars fan, this has to go to Pastor Fred's Christmas baby Yoda.

OPEN HOUSE

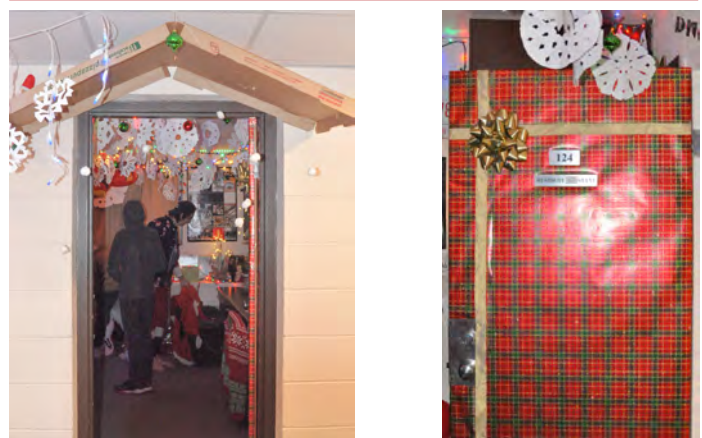
On the evening of December 4, UCA students were able to enjoy the annual open house tour of the dorms. Students could choose to decorate and open their rooms for both genders to see and share a taste of what life is like in their respective dormitory.

Asher Mack was quite impressed with the tour, explaining that, "The guys' dorm is lowkey military and you get into the girl's dorm and it's like some sort of metropolis."

Jillian Petersen surmised the event, claiming, "The guys' dorm is like a motel six."

The tour was a blaring affirmation of gender stereotypes. For example, the girls' dorm was bedecked in a variety of throw pillows, rugs, and other cozy paraphernalia in comparison to the stark industrial-style decorations of the guys' dorm with an unfortunate lack of throw pillows.

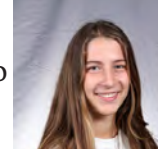
The evening ended with the announcement of the winners of the dorm room Christmas decorating competition in the girls' dorm lobby, for which everyone voted. Ryan Hughes and Isaac Acker won for the guys' dorm, and Francesca De La Paz for the girls' dorm. Each winner received a cash prize of \$25. This fun event is expected to happen again sometime this year, as unfortunately many students were unable to attend due to music tour.



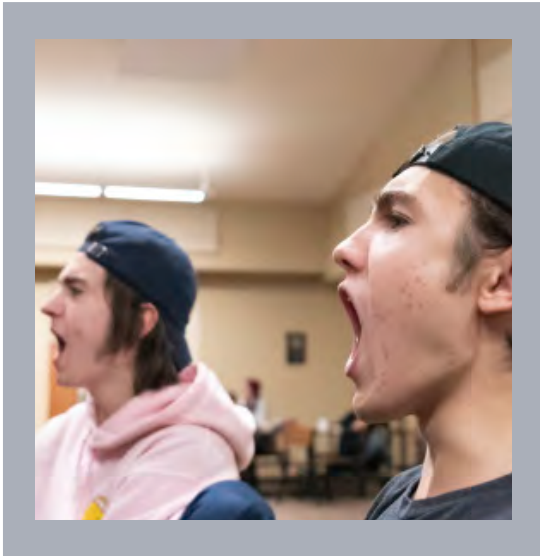
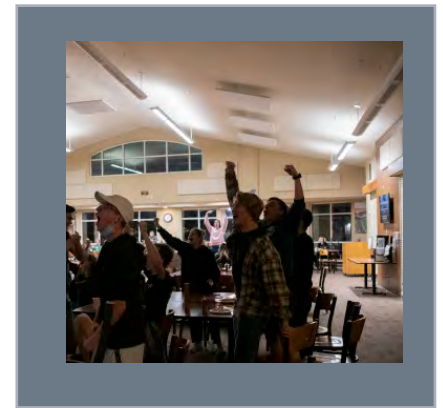
ESPORTS: ROCKET LEAGUE STATE FINALS

On December 9, our school's varsity Esports team played against Tahoma 3 in the state finals. Dean Hess took the role as the announcer and their coach, Adam Colcord, did a great job with helping the team get to where they ended up. Students Omar Entezar, Logan Henneberg, and Maddox Mack drew a large crowd to the cafeteria which served pizza, chips, and drinks for dinner. This was the teams first time playing in front of a live crowd and hearing, for themselves, the ecstatic shouts of the other students. But unfortunately, the player Deadeye (Logan) was unable to make it in person and participated from home.

The UCA team was to play seven total rounds against Tahoma, the winner having to take four of the seven matches. As the game began, UCA was the first to score which brought on a chorus of shouts from the audience. But as it progressed, Tahoma 3 continued to score against our team throughout the second and third rounds. The audience, with some encouragement from Dean Hess, continued to start up chants and cheers to encourage our UCA team. Halfway through the fourth round, tensions began to rise when UCA scored two goals in a row, tying them up. But in the end, Tahoma 3 made the last four goals and won the state finals, placing UCA in 7th for state championships. The UCA Rocket League team worked hard and did an amazing job working their way to the state championships!



Anna Phillips -
National News
Editor



SPREADING JOY



Mia Pierce -
Sports Highlight
Editor

Life has been hard for Donna Helems, a kind, old lady hailing from Illinois. She lost her job during the pandemic and has been unemployed for the past twenty months. Helems says that her worst fear is not being able to give her grandchildren anything for Christmas.

Helems' fear, however, will not become reality, thanks to the aid from the Journal Star Christmas Fund. The Journal Star Christmas Fund is an Illinois-based foundation that works to provide gift baskets with food and toys for families in need. Helems

is very grateful for the aid from this fund, as it brings both her and her children great joy during troubling times.

A lot can be learned from Helems' story. The Christmas season is not always a joyful time for everyone. Many people struggle with illness, financial troubles, and other hardships. This year, try to be go out of your way to help somebody who may be struggling during the Christmas season. You can help out a friend or donate to foundations, such as the Journal Star Christmas Fund. Make this holiday season a time to spread joy!

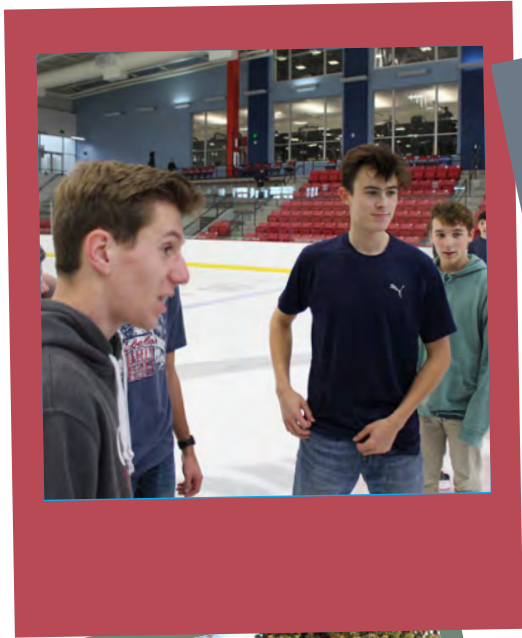


Photo Credits:
Ryan Hughes and Lyndi Brenton

MIKHAIL JOCKBOY & THE GOLDEN SNOW PEA

'Twas a stormy starry night, in the glowing icy city of Snow-bruhlinda. The frozen wind cut through Mikhail's already slated nerves, despite the fact he was a snowman. Things had gotten desperate at home, and he needed the money to fund his family's survival.

He was an experienced assassin in Chad, his home country. This was his night. Nothing could stop him from infiltrating the world's most renown golden vegetable treasury; nothing could stop him from taking the coveted Golden Snow Pea-a priceless artifact worth billions.

Standing on a fluffy snow poff, he made his way down into the Valley of Kale; a place infamous for it's skyscraper-high kale, which

creates the labyrinth of spinach and unwanted greens set before him. Like a bat out of hell, he barreled down the hilltop into the valley at supersonic speed unknown to snowmankind. he crashed into the forest of lettuce and began making his way through the foliage.

Eventually, he came across a plate of blue spaghetti. Despite the suspicious color, he took it and began eating.

Suddenly, the Spaghetti Yeti snatched him by the foot and yettied him so far, he slammed through the front door of the treasury.

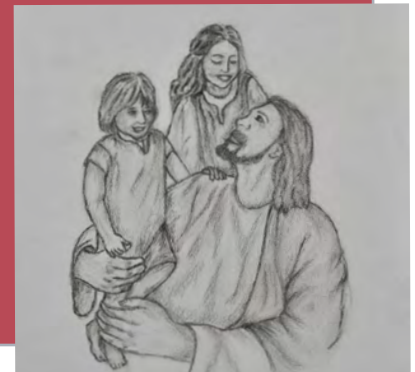
He tiptoed through the sprawling, dim-lit modern warehouse, searching for the pea. He saw

asparagus, then rutabaga, then-spinach... As the vegetables grew stronger, so did Mikhail's sense of confidence. Jockboy had made it. MikJockboy was so close he could taste it.

Wait. He actually COULD taste it. He took the pea out of his mouth and- There it was! The Golden Pea! It turned out the bag of peas he had been munching on contained what he was searching for the whole time. Happy Han-nukuh and merry glutens



Asher Mack -
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By: Karali Kendall



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