

B_U BAYLOR LARIAT

News for the students by the students



'Public relations for camels'

Local farmers teach while bringing Nativity story to life

**ZACH
BABAJANOF-RUSTRIAN**
Intern

Christmas on Fifth wouldn't be complete without its iconic live Nativity scene.

Trish Baum, program manager for resources for the Center for Academic Success and Engagement, and Doug Baum, former Cameron Park zookeeper, have brought animals to Christmas on Fifth for close to 20 years.

"Christmas on Fifth is pretty light duty for our camels, and we usually bring a donkey and a cow," Doug Baum said. "They are simply stationed on either side of the manger flanking Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and it's their job to look cool and authentic."

In addition to bringing their animals to Christmas on Fifth, the Baums have been bringing their camels to churches as part of live Nativity scenes for 27 years.

Doug Baum said the animals

give people a window into rural American life while creating a visual representation of the story of the birth of Jesus.

"A hundred years ago, 98% of us were farmers in America and lived a rural life. And today, when you flip that statistic, and it puts only 2% of us living a rural lifestyle, it means that there's a lot of obligation on those of us who do live a rural lifestyle to educate folks about livestock," Doug Baum said. "Beyond that, I think having the camels at Christmas on Fifth helps to visually tell this story and give families, especially young folks, an idea of what the birth of Jesus might have looked like."

The animals are a crowd favorite at Christmas on Fifth, as many students and families enjoy seeing animals they don't ordinarily come across.

"It's cool to have camels at Christmas on Fifth, because those are not everyday animals that we get to see," Chicago freshman George Allen said. "By having the camels there,

we get to feel like we were there at Jesus' birth."

While the Baums love providing live animals for live Nativity scenes, they said their animals' needs come first at their farm.

"There are things that every farm family knows and understands and just surrenders to," Doug Baum said. "We take care of them, and it's just a rhythm that every farmer family surrenders to."

However, the Baums' relationship with their animals goes beyond their role as caretakers.

"I have learned to basically be an ambassador for the camels, as we take them out in public and help folks learn and kind of demystify camels," Doug Baum said. "Everybody knows something about a camel, and it's generally wrong. So our family, we kind of see our job as public relations for camels to demystify and kind of break myths about camels."

You can find a full slideshow from The Lariat's time with the Baums' camels at baylorlariat.com.



Kenneth Prabhakar | Photo Editor

OVER THE HUMP Doug Baum gets cozy with one of his camels, Sabr, whose name means "patience" in Arabic.

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The gift guide to wrap all others: What to buy everyone in your life

EMMA WEIDMANN
Arts and Life Editor

'Tis the season to panic when it comes to shopping for loved ones. But this year, the work has already been done for you. Here's a definitive gift guide for all the different types of people in your life: the sorority girls, the indie boys and everyone in between. Many of these items can also be given to relatives or significant others, so get rid of that holiday stress and use this list as a guide to your wallet's next dent.

CLEAN GIRLS AND WORKAHOLICS

What to get the woman who has everything?

This year, SKIMS is one of the trendiest brands out there. From adorable staple neutrals to the coziest loungewear, any woman would be ecstatic to find this under the tree. A matching set in her favorite color will never fail to please.

She'll be cozy head to toe when she pairs that new lounge set with low-rise platform UGG boots. You've no doubt seen these all over campus, which means she has too and probably thought, "Dang, those are cute." While these are sold out in a lot of places, there are a lot of good dupes out there, so get digging.

If your girlfriend is a Swiftie, skip the overpriced merch and head to Tiffany & Co. or James Avery to get a silver pendant engraved with your initial — not hers — as an homage to the fan-favorite song, "Delicate."

If she's tied to her laptop, grab her a mug warmer so her coffee will always be hot — but not too hot. A good pair of blue light glasses will also give her eyes a break from the strain of electronic screens.



Abby Roper | Photographer

GYM RATS AND JOGGERS

Your friend who is always at the gym is definitely in need of a good water bottle. This Stanley Iceflow water bottle is different from the ones you've seen all over campus. It holds half a gallon of water and has a handle similar to a Hydro Flask — so no need to carry it like a sippy cup with the side handle. This one won't leak as much, and it will keep water as cold as ever.

For the golf guy who values comfort and style, a good pair of Lululemon pants is a dream come true. These look good with a polo shirt, but they can be dressed down for a more casual look. They're a versatile gift that can be given to a boyfriend, a brother or a father.

INDIE BOYS AND GRANOLA GIRLS

A good vintage-style sweatshirt of a favorite team or band, a nice leather or corduroy jacket and a fleece pullover all make great gifts and will make sure your favorite person is warm on those freezing walks to class in January.

If you have an outdoorsy person in your life, get them a flat bill hat. The embroidery and rope stretching across the front adds the elevated touch that makes it more than a baseball cap. It's super trendy, and it'll take every fit up that extra notch while still keeping it casual.

To up their Instagram game in the new year, grab a digital camera so they can capture all their favorite memories in 2024. This is a gift that keeps on giving, as the photos they take on it will last a lifetime.

A print of a cover of The New Yorker from their birthday is a perfect touch. You can find tons of these on Etsy, and the great thing about them is that for each birthday, there are a few different options from throughout the decades to choose from.

Lastly, go on a vintage tour of Waco to scout out their favorite records on vinyl. Trust me, the sound of vintage vinyl is better than anything you can buy new from Target or Barnes and Noble, and it'll most likely be cheaper anyway.

CAN'T FIND A GOOD GIFT?

Let's face it: Most of the people in your life aren't easy to put into a specific box. So, if finding a good gift has been a hassle for you, here are some ways to brainstorm the perfect present.

Think about what they talk about. Be an active listener, and pick up on the things they mention they want to have or the activities they have been dreaming of.

Or, come up with a gift that solves a problem they have — a really nice pair of slippers for people with chronic cold feet or a silk pillowcase for those who may often mention frizzy hair. Don't be afraid to get a little creative and think outside the gift box.



Olivia Eiken | Staff Writer

How to make your own gift-worthy potpourri

OLIVIA EIKEN
Staff Writer

I'm from the Midwest, where the holiday spirit comes early in October when the temperature drops to the low 40s and the leaves start to change color. My mother always celebrated the change of weather by putting potpourri on the stovetop to simmer all day and fill our home with the smell of oranges, cranberries, rosemary and spices.

A typical potpourri is a mixture of fruits, dried herbs and spices placed in a small sack to perfume anything from a piece of clothing to a whole room. I have recreated a version of it on a college student budget that can easily be made into six to eight individual gifts.

Potpourri makes a great, easy gift for that professor you really enjoyed having this semester and the friends you made along the way — especially if you're ballin' on a budget.

Scan here for an easy step-by-step guide on how to make it.



Put the jingle back in Christmas season

EMMA WEIDMANN
 Arts & Life Editor

Maybe it happened the moment I stopped believing in Santa Claus, or maybe I was just that age.

Whatever it was, I remember when Christmas stopped feeling like Christmas. Yeah, there were lights on the trees, and there was holiday music in every store at the mall, but the season had lost its shine.

Compared to those days as a fourth grader when all I wanted was an American Girl doll that looked like me and good hot chocolate at the last-day-of-school party, there was something lackluster about Christmas as a teenager.

I think that might be the case for a lot of us, and at the risk of sounding like the train conductor from “The Polar Express,” maybe it’s time we tried remembering what it was we loved about Christmas in the first place.

Think about it. As a kid, Christmas had a shroud of mystery all over it, and there

was anticipation that topped even the birthday butterflies. All season long, you felt the novelty of it mixed with the knowledge that it would end.

That was a weird feeling: waiting so impatiently for the day to come and knowing that when it did, that was it. Even so, it was really magical.

As a kid, the whole season was spent dreaming of that one gift you had your heart set on. It wasn’t even kiddo consumerism. It was just the dream of something new and shiny, delivered to you by something mystical — so mystical, in fact, that seeing it with your own eyes would prevent it from happening.

I could never sleep on Christmas Eve. The pure notion that when I woke up, the living room would take on a sparkling, festive look with presents under the tree, music playing and “A Christmas Story” on the TV was enough to keep me awake all night.

But then you grew up, and suddenly the most exciting thing about Christmas was that finals were over and you got a break from schoolwork to do nothing but sit on your phone all day.

Too old for toys, the most you hoped for was maybe some new shoes or a new iPhone if you were lucky.

Something had changed. Putting up lights was more stressful than exciting because now you were capable and tall enough to help wrap them around the tree in the front yard, but they never looked right.

I’m trying to get that old magical feeling back. For me, I think it comes down to purposefully living my life like it’s a Hallmark movie.

Walk the Christmas markets, grab a hot chocolate and do some shopping. Listen to Michael Bublé whenever you feel like it. Force your friends to take a drive and look at Christmas lights in fancy neighborhoods.

Go all out on decorating and wrap presents like you work at a dang Macy’s. Bake the cookies. Watch “Elf” — and watch it again.

This year, do everything you can to make it feel special again, and like Taylor Swift said, leave the Christmas lights up until January.



“
 Go all out on decorating and wrap presents like you work at a dang Macy’s. Bake the cookies. Watch “Elf” — and watch it again.

EMMA WEIDMANN |
ARTS & LIFE EDITOR

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Sports Take: Best bowl games over the holidays

MICHAEL HAAG
Sports Editor

Don't let the aroma of Thanksgiving dinner distract you: Bowl season is near.

The college football season is one of the best times of the year, and it all builds up to bowl games over the holidays. Growing up as a fan of the game, there are certain matchups that come to mind when looking back. Sometimes it's a byproduct of the magnitude of the bowl game, but there are instances in which a less-desirable bowl game provides a thrilling contest.

As the holiday season nears, here are the five best annual bowl games to watch.

1. ROSE BOWL

This one shouldn't come as a surprise. The Rose Bowl checks all the boxes, from an incredible venue to captivating matchups. Oh yeah — and it's a New Year's Six Bowl, for good reason.

It would be impossible to forget the 2011 and 2012 Rose Bowl matchups. Those were two games that had my eyes glued to the television screen the entire time. From Andy Dalton leading No. 3 TCU to a tight win over Wisconsin in 2011 to Oregon's true freshman DeAnthony Thomas putting up 315 all-purpose yards on the Badgers a year later, the Rose Bowl is a spectacle in itself.

The Rose Bowl is one of the most storied bowl games in college football history (the inaugural game was in 1902), and it's a place in Pasadena, Calif., that every fan should want to visit at least once in their life.

2. ALLSTATE SUGAR BOWL

Baylor fans ought to like this one. There's nothing sweeter than sugar, and that's the type of vibe you get with the Sugar Bowl. Not only is this another New Year's Six Bowl, but it's also located in a fun city: New Orleans.

The fondest memory has to be when Baylor took down Ole Miss 21-7 in the 2022 Sugar Bowl. That victory capped off a 12-win season for the Bears — the best in program history — after already winning the 2021 Big 12 Championship.

Ohio State's 42-35 win over Alabama in the 2015 Sugar Bowl was pretty memorable as well, especially since that was a College Football Playoff game.

3. VALERO ALAMO BOWL

This is more of a personal pick, having grown up about 30 miles south of San Antonio, where the Alamo Bowl is played every year. This is a fun one, even if it's not filled with the absolute best teams in the country.

Usually, there are still two very good teams in this bowl game, as it typically selects the second-choice Pac-12 and Big 12 teams. Plus, regardless of what you think of the Alamodome and San Antonio, it's a great place to be.

It feels like Texas is always in this game, but who could forget Robert Griffin III leading Baylor to a 67-56 win over Washington



Lariat file photo

GONE BOWLING Wide receiver Corey Coleman (1) trots the ball into the end zone for the Bears' second touchdown of the 2015 Cotton Bowl. Baylor would go on to lose 42-41 in the highest-scoring Cotton Bowl in the games history.

in 2011? That was the start of a new era for the Bears, and it's one of many reasons this is such an underrated game.

4. TOSTITOS FIESTA BOWL

Another New Year's Six Bowl game, the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl is already fun enough due to its name. How could you not like this game? Phoenix is another wonderful city, and the game always pits great teams against each other.

Contrary to the last two bowl games, this one won't resonate as well with Bears fans. Baylor won its first Big 12 championship in 2013 but wound up falling to UCF 52-42 in the Fiesta Bowl. Outside of the Bears' loss, there have been other iconic moments to come from this bowl game.

TCU and Michigan gave us a thriller last year, with the Horned Frogs winning the CFP game 51-45. That matchup, among others, has made this one of the best bowl games out there. There's nothing quite like sitting on your couch with a bag

of chips to watch the Fiesta Bowl over the holiday break.

5. DUKE'S MAYO BOWL

The Texan in me wants to pick the Cotton Bowl, but having four of the six New Year's Six Bowls on this list felt too basic. Plus, the Duke's Mayo Bowl is so much fun; I don't care what anyone else has to say.

Yeah, it's pretty gross to see fans literally eating mayonnaise out of a jar, but isn't that what makes college football bowl games great? This one has an identity, and it has to be an advertising hit for Duke's Mayo.

The Mayo Bowl is usually played around Christmas, so it's a fun holiday treat to lounge around and watch. On top of that, the head coach gets doused in Duke's Mayo after the game. Come on, that's just awesome. Imagine Baylor head coach Dave Aranda getting coated in mayonnaise. That's must-see television.



Kassidy Tsikitas | Photographer

SPIRIT OF GIVING Students can donate a guest meal swipe at All-University Thanksgiving.

On-campus festivities channel spirit of giving

SARAH GALLAHER
 Staff Writer

With the central theme of generosity, Thanksgiving and Christmas provide opportunities to give back to the community — and at All-University Thanksgiving and Christmas on Fifth, attendees can spread the spirit of giving right here at Baylor.

All-University Thanksgiving, an annual Thanksgiving dinner hosted by the Baylor Student Foundation, emphasizes the importance of giving through the Bear Swipe Share program. The event is from 5 to 8 p.m. on Nov. 15 at Fountain Mall. Bear Swipe Share collects unused guest passes from students with meal plans to distribute to students in need through The Store — Baylor's on-campus food pantry.

"[All-University Thanksgiving] is the biggest drive we host for swipes all year," Lauren da Silva, manager of The Store, said. "We had just over 1,000 swipe donations this past Thanksgiving."

Despite the many swipes donated at last year's drive, resources are limited, and The Store does not have enough swipes to keep up with the demand. Da Silva said she hopes this year's meal swipe drive at All-University Thanksgiving will be an even greater success.

Since food is a big topic during the holiday season, da Silva said people pay more attention to the needs of those who do not have adequate resources.

"Thanksgiving being about gratitude and family and Christmas being about giving — in most people's minds, I think giving just floats to the top of people's awareness," da Silva said. "We do certainly notice an increase in interest around this time of year."

Another Baylor tradition, Christmas on Fifth, also focuses on the importance of giving

during the holidays. Along with a variety of events and activities, it features opportunities with Compassion International.

Baylor partnered with Compassion International in 2020 as part of its Illuminate strategic plan in an attempt to expand the institution's impact as a Christian research university. Compassion International aims to free children across the globe from poverty through its child sponsorship program, which allows donors to provide a variety of resources for children, including meals, education and health care.

Jordy Dickey, director of Student Activities, said Compassion International will highlight its giving opportunities from 5 to 10 p.m. Nov. 30 in the first-floor CUB lounge.

"In years past, it really has been an opportunity to learn more about the organization, to maybe even consider sponsoring a child," Dickey said.

While Compassion International's presence at Christmas on Fifth is only one part of the event, Dickey said the spirit of giving still exists in the celebration as a whole, as decorations and other supplies are donated to Santa's Workshop after the event.

"Christmas on Fifth has always had a giving aspect to it since its very start," Dickey said. "It really helps us to solidify that this is a beloved tradition, but it helps us get into the spirit of giving as well."

Dickey said Christmas and giving go hand in hand, and although generosity should exist year-round, the holidays inspire giving within the Baylor community.

"It's a season of giving, a season of hope, a season of joy," Dickey said. "So when we see these opportunities to partner with different organizations with giving opportunities, our community responds to that really well."

What to Do in Waco: Thanksgiving edition

WACO DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET

Nov. 18 | 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. | 500 Washington Ave. | This weekly event hosts local vendors, artisans and craftsmen in the heart of downtown Waco, accompanied by live music.

DR PEPPER PARANORMAL EXPERIENCE

Nov. 18 | 7 p.m. | Dr Pepper Museum, 300 S Fifth St. | \$35 tickets | Experience a guided tour of the Dr Pepper Museum. Some have seen glowing orbs and mysterious figures haunt this Waco landmark.

BRIDGE STREET FARMERS MARKET

Nov. 22 | 5 - 8 p.m. | Bridge Street Plaza, S MLK Jr Blvd. | This weekly market is a branch of the Waco Downtown Farmers Market in East Waco.

LIGHTS OF WEST

Nov. 22 - Dec. 30 | 6 - 10 p.m. | 2818 Wiggins Road | \$35-55 | This drive-thru light show in West features holiday favorites like Santa and his reindeer as well as scenes from the Bible. There is also a walkable light maze for those who want to take in the sights on foot.

POULTRY IN MOTION: WACO TURKEY TROT

Nov. 23 | 8 - 11 a.m. | Waco Suspension Bridge, 101 N University Parks Drive | \$35-40 | Participate in either a one-mile fun run or a timed 5K on Thanksgiving morning.

BAYLOR FOOTBALL VS. WEST VIRGINIA

Nov. 25 | Time TBD | Baylor football takes on the West Virginia Mountaineers in the last home game of the season.

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Making a list, checking it twice: Season's best, most festive films

KALENA REYNOLDS
Reporter

Christmas is right around the corner, and it's finally socially acceptable to buy a jug of eggnog that will probably sit in the back of your fridge until spring cleaning comes around. That said, it's also time for the annual rotation of classic Christmas movies, so here's the starting lineup based on originality, acting, plot and likability. And no, "Die Hard" didn't make the list.

1. "NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION"

Sliding into the No. 1 spot is the notable "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation." Between the dirty, outrageous humor and over-the-top storyline, this Christmas film is so bad, it's good. While it's not your average heartwarming family Christmas movie, it's one that will leave your head spinning and stomach sore from laughter. It won't be the first on most Christmas movie rankings — or even on the list, for that matter — but it encapsulates the Christmas spirit. Chevy Chase never fails in cinema and always finds a way to craft characters that are both equally lovable and cringeworthy. This film takes a turn from the typical "everything is perfect because it's Christmas" facade that plays out in a majority of holiday movies, showcasing a more realistic side of Christmastime.

2. "THE SANTA CLAUSE 2"

While the entirety of "The Santa Clause" movie franchise is binge-worthy, "The Santa Clause 2" is made for the full-bellied fireplace watch on Christmas Eve. The cast is unbeatable, from Tim Allen and Elizabeth Mitchell to David Krumholtz and Spencer Breslin. In "The Santa Clause 2," Tim Allen's Scott Calvin is thrown two significant roadblocks: His son is on the naughty list, and Calvin must get married if he wants to remain Santa. Allen's character is blunt and lacks self-awareness, but he turns a corner as he meets his love interest. While he learns to open his heart, he steals ours with his care for his son and the people around him, which is why it deserves the second spot on this list.

3. "A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS"

Let's be honest here: "A Charlie Brown Christmas" is basically a cult classic. Everyone has seen it, and everyone loves it. There is nothing particularly spectacular about this movie beyond its nostalgia. It has withstood the test of time across generations, as it was first released in 1965 and is still streamed online due to its popularity. It's heartwarming and a sweet reminder of childhood innocence and glee during Christmas.

The movie was ahead of its time, as the storyline follows Charlie Brown and his frustration with materialism during Christmas. Linus' infamous speech about the true meaning of Christmas is still notable today and manages to cheer up Charlie Brown after he experiences a wave of doubt and deflation upon learning how his peers view Christmas.

4. "KRAMPUS"

While "Krampus" isn't what most people think of when envisioning warm and fuzzy Christmas movies, it features a unique spin on holiday films: It will send a chill down everyone's spine with

its top-notch jump scares.

The film was released in 2015 and is based on European folklore about a devil-horned monster that eats children on the naughty list. Everyone needs a change from the average rotation of Christmas movies, and "Krampus" is the perfect film for that — as long as you don't watch it at night.

5. "ELF"

"Elf" takes the No. 5 spot on this list for its classic belly laughs and all-around cuteness. There is no doubt that the acting in this movie is top-notch, but it's arguably overrated, which is why it's landing in fifth place.

The movie has one of the best casts of any Christmas movie. With Will Ferrell and Zooey Deschanel as two of the main characters, it was bound to be a hit. Ferrell's quirky take on Buddy the Elf and how he views the world is refreshing. The film was unique during its release and remains so to this day — thanks to its ability to avoid being too cheesy despite its over-the-top main character, who we all know and love.

Illustration by Kassidy Tsakitas | Photographer

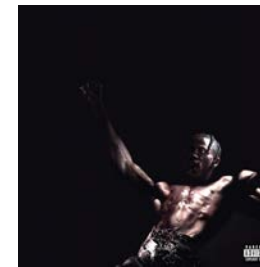


2023's best albums

ERIKA KUEHL
Staff Writer

With 2023 coming to a close, it's time to recognize the top albums that were released this year. (Be warned, Swifties: I'm not including any of Taylor's re-recorded albums.)

"UTOPIA" BY TRAVIS SCOTT



Starting with my personal favorite of the year, "Utopia" by Travis Scott is filled with top rap features and insane beats. If you haven't already heard "FE!N" at a frat party, the song is the most popular on the album, with 1.3 million page views. Alongside features from Future, Drake and SZA, this album doesn't miss.

"THE RECORD" BY BOYGENIUS

For the people who love fall leaves and slow days, boygenius releasing "The Record" was a win. The three melancholy singers — Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers and Lucy Dacus — made a heart-wrenching and insightful, acoustic-heavy album full of sentiments of life and love. With warm melodies and dark realities in every lyric, this album is a must-listen for anyone who wants to feel something.



"UNREAL UNEARTH" BY HOZIER



After a four-year hiatus, Hozier brought literature to life. A musical account of Dante's "Inferno," this work differs greatly from anything he's ever done. With roots in his Irish heritage and beauty, this concept album contains enough soul to share with his audience. Although his previous albums have more hits, "Unreal Unearth" rips into Hozier's emotions and is arguably his best album yet.



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musical rankings.

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More than a meal: All-University Thanksgiving brings Baylor together

TYLER WHITE

Staff Writer

The dining halls are closed, Fountain Mall is adorned with rows upon rows of tables and students are flocking to get in line for some good old-fashioned turkey and pumpkin pie.

Every year, the Baylor Student Foundation joins forces with student government and Baylor Dining to put on All-University Thanksgiving, providing the Baylor community with an opportunity to gather together for an early Thanksgiving dinner.

Andy VanZanten, director of the Baylor Student Foundation, said the primary goal of the organization is to serve Baylor's past, present and future — and All-University Thanksgiving is an opportunity for it to serve Baylor's present population in a positive way.

"I think Baylor in general understands the importance of gathering, and I think Baylor's a school that gathers well," VanZanten said. "This is one of the largest gatherings of Baylor students in one place at one time that's not revolved around athletics or Sing or Pigskin. Just the opportunity to serve in an atmosphere where the whole idea of the event is just gathering together and being with people you care about."

VanZanten said the greatest impact of the event lies in its relational aspect. He said he has heard stories throughout the years of students who have met their best friends at All-University Thanksgiving.

"I think a lot of it is building relationships — and relationships and that'll last for years," VanZanten said. "What may seem like a small moment or an unintentional running into of two different friend groups by happenstance that are sitting with each other at the same table,



Photo courtesy of Milo Langmore

FOOD, FRIENDS, FAMILY Baylor students, faculty and staff gather on Fountain Mall last year to celebrate All-University Thanksgiving with food and conversation.

for those types of moments to turn it into long-lasting relationships, long-lasting friendships."

Houston junior Sarah Chan, a member of the Baylor Student Foundation's campus promotions committee, said that the All-University Thanksgiving celebration highlights the importance of community on campus.

"Community is centered often around food and people, and so it's such a great way to see the

campus come together — and not only being reminded of a thankful season but also being reminded of the community that we have here at Baylor," Chan said.

The event allows students to engage in a way that emphasizes the welcoming atmosphere of the university, Chan said, and gives students an avenue to develop relationships in a powerful way.

"I think a lot of people come to Baylor for that aspect and for

the community, because it's such a unique element of Baylor," Chan said. "And so I think this event just really does a great job in embodying the atmosphere of Baylor and how that does connect with the future of Baylor students."

Dallas senior Grant Winslow, a co-chair of the Baylor Student Foundation's campus promotions committee, said All-University Thanksgiving can even serve as an icebreaker for students.

"I feel like it's almost like an icebreaker — kind of like you just get a warm-up and you really get to find a nice, simple way to connect to people," Winslow said. "So whether that's the people that you serve with, whether it's the people that you get to sit down with or if it's people you already know, you just get to develop that even further."

Winslow said the event also helps students in their transition from home to the college environment.

"I think it really boils down to what this impact means going forward, because I think in college in general, everyone's going through a very interesting [transitional] period where you're just learning a lot about yourself honestly — where you'll open yourself up to new avenues, experience new stuff you've never even imagined before," Winslow said. "Some people could see that through All-University Thanksgiving."

Don't sleep on
the sides for
Thanksgiving

Scan here to read!



Make your presence a present: Help out at home

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

After a tiring whirlwind of a semester is capped off with finals and weeks worth of burnout, we finally get to go home for winter break. Everyone's experience with break is different, but there may be a theme of having a bit too much family time and being a really awesome couch potato for about a month.

Yes, it is relieving to relax and turn your brain off, but don't forget you're a guest wherever you're staying — even if it's home. Leaving for holiday breaks, you may be excited not to worry about a sink full of dishes or which roommate is going to take the trash out. That being said, be prepared to pitch in and help where possible.

You may be staying in your questionably decorated childhood bedroom, but you aren't a child anymore. Invest in some acts of service this holiday season and help out around the house instead of expecting to be waited on. For example, if you have younger siblings or family members, pitch in to make the holidays magic for them.

Ask whoever you're staying with what you can do to help, or jump in if you see something that needs to be done. Doing the dishes or helping cook can lessen the stress of the holiday season.

You don't have to be Gordon Ramsay to chop some vegetables or stir something on the stove. Plus, lending a hand to cooking can be a great learning experience.



Gwen Henry | Cartoonist

You'll likely be in charge of a majority of the holiday cooking and planning one day, so you might as well get a head start on learning now.

Another thing to be mindful of is how stressful the holiday season can be. This time of year can raise stress and worries for many families in a variety of ways.

Regardless of your usual role in the festivities, gratitude and helpfulness goes a long way. Say please and thank you, and show thankfulness to the people around you. Be a part

of the solution to potential stressors — not a part of the problem.

A good way to show gratitude and participate in holidays as an adult is to give gifts. Gift-giving can be a struggle on a college student's budget, but presents don't have to be expensive. A handwritten letter, small item or DIY present can go a long way to show you care.

While being helpful and volunteering to pitch in when possible is important, relaxation during break is too.

Be sure to take time for yourself, practice mindfulness and self-care, and be present with your family and friends. It can be easy to take time with family, friends or yourself for granted, especially when all most students want to do over break is veg out.

It's perfectly fine to take the time off from school to get cozy on the couch and catch up on some Netflix shows, but remember there's a balance of being a helpful presence and carving out space and time to relax.

Avoid travel for holidays

CLAIRE-MARIE SCOTT
 LTVN Reporter

The holiday season is one of the most popular times to travel during the year. Some people try to see family who live out of town, while others are looking to watch the ball drop in Times Square on New Year's Eve. I believe the best thing to do during the holiday season is relax and enjoy the festivities in the comfort of my own home.

The thought of experiencing a different city over Thanksgiving or Christmas might sound appealing, but in reality, it will just make you exhausted.

Day-to-day life is already stressful enough, so making use of designated rest time during the holidays will help you feel recharged. You can hang out with family who you normally wouldn't be able to see during the semester and catch up with friends from home. Plus, you can avoid the stress of holiday travel at the airport.

If you stay home for the holidays, you and your family will also be saving a ton of money. Plane tickets, hotel rooms and car rentals are priced much higher during the final months of the year. Saving the money

from travel will allow you to splurge on other items that you might want, or it can be put aside for a later time.

My favorite part about Christmas is that I get to be cozy with my family all day long. We always have extended family come over for Christmas dinner, which allows us to spend time with others and celebrate while still having an intimate feel.



Another one of my favorite traditions that my hometown friends and I partake in is having a gathering every year. We make hot cocoa, watch movies, exchange gifts and eat comfort food. I treasure these nights because we get to catch up on each other's lives and enjoy the cozy vibes of the season.

If you want to get out of your hometown and see new scenery, I recommend looking at cities around yours and seeing what holiday festivities they have planned.

Often, smaller towns have lights displayed around their town square or host fun activities.

These visits can be fun, inexpensive day trips that allow you to travel without all the chaos.

Whatever you are planning to do, I hope you stay safe and treasure this time with family and friends, rejoicing in the true spirit of the season.



Kassidy Tsikitas | Photographer

TO THE TABLE Students who come from a Hispanic background often look forward to a variety of foods, such as tamales, during the holidays.

Cooking up memories: Food connects students with culture during holidays

OLIVIA EIKEN
Staff Writer

Holiday dishes reflect a culture's values, geography and traditions. They serve as a tangible link to history and past loved ones while helping people who may feel removed connect back to their cultural heritage and celebrate important occasions.

Pharr graduate student Victoria Brewster-Martinez grew up in a Mexican-American household. In her culture, Martinez said it is extremely common for holidays and family gatherings to revolve around food and spending time with family in the kitchen.

"Cooking is a very important part of the Mexican culture that embraces tradition and quality time together," Martinez said. "Some of my favorite memories with family were made in the kitchen, whether it was making buñuelos with my grandmother, learning to make tamales with my mother-in-law or even watching my mom and aunts set the table

for guests to arrive. The kitchen holds strong traditions and has been the place to make memories for as long as I can remember."

Martinez said her favorite holiday dish is a botana platter.

"It's a large platter that includes a bed of nachos with grilled vegetables, grilled chicken and/or beef, avocado, quesadillas and salsas spread on top of them," Martinez said. "This dish is often served at large gatherings and can be ordered in most Mexican restaurants. It can also be called a picadera, botanera or a parrillada."

Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, junior Jose Chirivella-Román also comes from a household with Spanish influence, and he said his Puerto Rican, Cuban and Catholic upbringing played a role in how holiday meals were prepared growing up. Typically, this looked like attending large parties put on by different families in the neighborhood and indulging in the delicious food each family had to offer.

"It's a lot of food — and often, way too much," Román said. "For

starters, my family loves serrano ham and different fried foods like alcapurrias, empanadillas and pastelillo. Then we have pasteles [Puerto Rican tamales], arroz with gandules, tostones [fried plantains] and roast a whole pig."

Román said the best part of the celebration is always the roasted pig, also known as lechón a la vara.

"Lechón a la vara is the food I would do anything for," Román said. "It's a whole roasted pig, and it has arroz con gandules [Puerto Rican rice with pigeon peas] smoked inside of it. It's the mix of flavor, juicy pork and crunchy and savory skin. If ever given the chance to try this Puerto Rican delicacy, you must do it."

Like so many, Román said ultimately it's food that makes Christmas so special in his culture.

"There is an obvious bond between cooking, enjoying drinks, music and conversation with my family during the holidays," Román said. "It's my favorite time of year and

has left me with so many good Christmas memories."

Edinburg senior Vivek George has a South Indian and Catholic upbringing in which he celebrated a variety of holidays, from Christmas to the annual Hindu festival of Onam. George said his favorite dishes from the holidays are the ones most common in South Asian cultures.

"My favorite dish that is usually made during Christmas is palappam and mutton stew," George said. "Palappam can best be described as a thin fermented rice crepe, while mutton stew uses a young lamb to prepare."

For other holidays like Thanksgiving and Easter, George said potluck-style dishes are more commonly served.

"It's common to have potluck dishes where the host family makes the main dish, but everyone else brings something for themselves," George said. "For the main holidays like Christmas and Onam, it is more common for all the adults to come together to cook the dishes."



Scan here for some holiday outfit recommendations to 'sleigh' the holiday season.





Lariat file photo

How to deck the halls on nickels and dimes

DANI BIGHAM
 Reporter

The holiday season is upon us. Your residence hall or small apartment might be feeling drab, but the cost of decorating means your budget feels limited to a Charlie Brown Christmas. Here's how to decorate without breaking the bank.

TREE

Large fake trees — 6 feet and up — take up too much space and can cost hundreds of dollars. Even smaller trees that are 4 or 5 feet can be over \$75. However, you can get mini trees that are around 2 feet for between \$10 and \$15. Another option, which I enjoy, is using string lights to form the shape of a Christmas tree on the wall, saving space along the way.

ORNAMENTS

Now you've got your tree, but it's looking incredibly bare. You can buy ornaments, but they either break easily, fall off or don't work with your string light tree. Making your own ornaments can be a fun project that gives you a study break. You can cut circles out of scrap paper or colorful construction paper. Single circles work well for the string light tree, while folding and gluing several circles together create charming round ornaments for a traditional tree.

In terms of garland, you could go with the

classic popcorn, but if you would prefer to eat it instead of using it for decoration, I completely understand. You can use colorful yarn and either braid it together or make a simple crochet chain.

Your tree looks gorgeous, but you can't forget the topper. For your string light tree, a simple star cut out of paper will do. For a traditional tree, you can use an empty paper towel or toilet roll. Decorate the tube with paint, paper or glitter glue on both the inside and the outside, cut equal slits in the tube and trim the strips into points. Fold the points outward, and you have a star.

GET ADVENT-UROUS

If you want to expand the decor beyond the tree, I would recommend buying a simple regular-sized stocking and using felt or glitter glue to add a personalized touch. For fun with your roommates, have everyone pick a name and decorate the stocking for that person.

Those who celebrate Christmas can make Advent calendars with their own personal twist, getting a small treat or surprise every day. Take your favorite candies, put a label or scribble a number on them, and place them in a bowl. Then you get one candy each day.

Meanwhile, since candles are a no-go in residence halls, those who celebrate Hanukkah can create a menorah and candles out of felt.

The best part about making your decorations is that you get to do silly crafts with your friends in the spirit of holiday cheer.

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Lariat file photo

A CAMPUS GRINCH In 1995, members of Delta Sigma Pi business fraternity assemble a Christmas tree they brought to replace one stole from the accounting department.

The ghost of Baylor's past: How students celebrated the holidays before first Christmas on Fifth

EMMA WEIDMANN
Arts and Life Editor

With all its holiday happiness and festive fun, Christmas on Fifth is a beloved tradition for Baylor students. However, the annual celebration is only 22 years old, and the tree lighting by Kappa Omega Tau only began in 1967.

Dr. Elizabeth Rivera, associate librarian and university archivist, said Christmas on Fifth has become very near and dear to Baylor students' hearts, despite being fairly new.

"It's something that the students want to celebrate, and they recognize that they can bring alumni, administration, faculty and staff and students together," Rivera said. "And any time you can do that within the university setting, you're creating what a university is supposed to be — and that's unity, and that's camaraderie and that's culture. And so Christmas on Fifth has become a culture icon for the holidays."

Before the camels and the sweatshirts and the light shows, what was Christmas like at Baylor for its first 120 years?

In 1945, The Baylor Lariat reported that students were doing their best to embrace the holiday spirit following the end of World War II. While they only got 12 days for Christmas break, they made the most of the season during the semester.

In Memorial, Alexander and Burleson Halls — back when Burleson was a women's residence hall and not an academic building — students decorated trees in the common spaces. According to the article, a large tree was accompanied by a miniature one in Alexander, and "Christmas bells tied with red ribbon are found in the dormitory windows."

Fast forward two decades, and Dr. Alton Hassell, a retired

professor of chemistry, was a junior at Baylor when KOT lit its tree in the middle of campus for the first time. Last year, he told the Lariat the tree lighting filled an empty role at the university.

"Back in the fall of 1967, going toward the Christmas season, there was no Christmas decoration on campus at all," Hassell said.

Rivera said during the 1960s, Christmas gave people something to look forward to and tied them together in the midst of the Vietnam War. She said the decade was a time in which youth pushed back against societal norms, which made it hard for some to relate to others — and that's where Christmas comes in.

"A lot of times when conflict exists, it makes it very difficult for people to recognize the need for camaraderie and coming together," Rivera said. "That's what Christmas is all about — to celebrate the one who made it all and who gives it all. He gives life, and Christmas on Fifth is to bring those people together, and that's what Christ does really well."

The 1990s brought a more turbulent time for the Christmas tree lighting. In 1995, the Lariat reported that the tree had several new lights, as the fir from the year before "was torched by vandals."

Through wars and decades of campus life, Christmas traditions have brought the Baylor community together. After the first Christmas on Fifth celebration in 2001, class of 2000 alumnus Matt Bonow wrote a letter to the Lariat expressing his joy.

"Fifth Street at night is beautiful, and the joyful atmosphere on Baylor's campus is hard to ignore," Bonow said. "If you were present for Christmas on Fifth Street and witnessed our cooperative and diverse community come together for one purpose, may you be reminded of why our extraordinary university is so unique and exceptional. ... Continue the Baylor tradition!"

Scan here to read about the events Baylor and Waco are holding throughout the holiday season, from light shows to festivals and everything in between!



Be grateful this holiday season: Research shows gratitude improves mental well-being

SHELBY PECK

Copy Editor

As students near the end of the fall semester, stress only seems to increase, as does the number of assignments and longing for the holidays. In the busyness of the fall, students might be overlooking one practice that has the potential to greatly improve their mental well-being: gratitude.

“There are tons of studies that suggest that gratitude is correlated with lower depression, lower anxiety and increased psychological well-being, as well as increased physical well-being,” Dr. Jo-Ann Tsang, associate professor of psychology, said. “It’s got some good cardiovascular health effects. It helps with sleep quality, which then helps with some other physical health well-being effects. So it’s definitely something worth studying.”

Tsang, who researches gratitude from a social-psychological standpoint, said many studies revolving around gratitude interventions

suggest gratitude has a stronger effect on one’s well-being when actually communicated to other people, such as through writing gratitude letters.

“You deliver the letter, and this has a really big positive effect on well-being,” Tsang said. “People just feel really connected and really happy, and they’ve even found that if you don’t write a big letter, but even just texting people three times a day to tell someone that you’re grateful for them or thank you for this or whatever has a bigger social effect than just thinking about what you’re grateful for.”

Tsang said one of the biggest challenges people impose on themselves when communicating gratitude is the fear of what others may think. However, she said a 2018 study revealed the recipients don’t feel awkward at all; rather, they are thankful.

“When I think about thanking somebody, it’s going to feel to me like it’s really awkward and that I’m going to do something wrong and that I’m not going to say it the right way, but that’s not what people care about,” Tsang said. “Not only does that have a good effect on my well-being, but it strengthens my relationship with those people.”

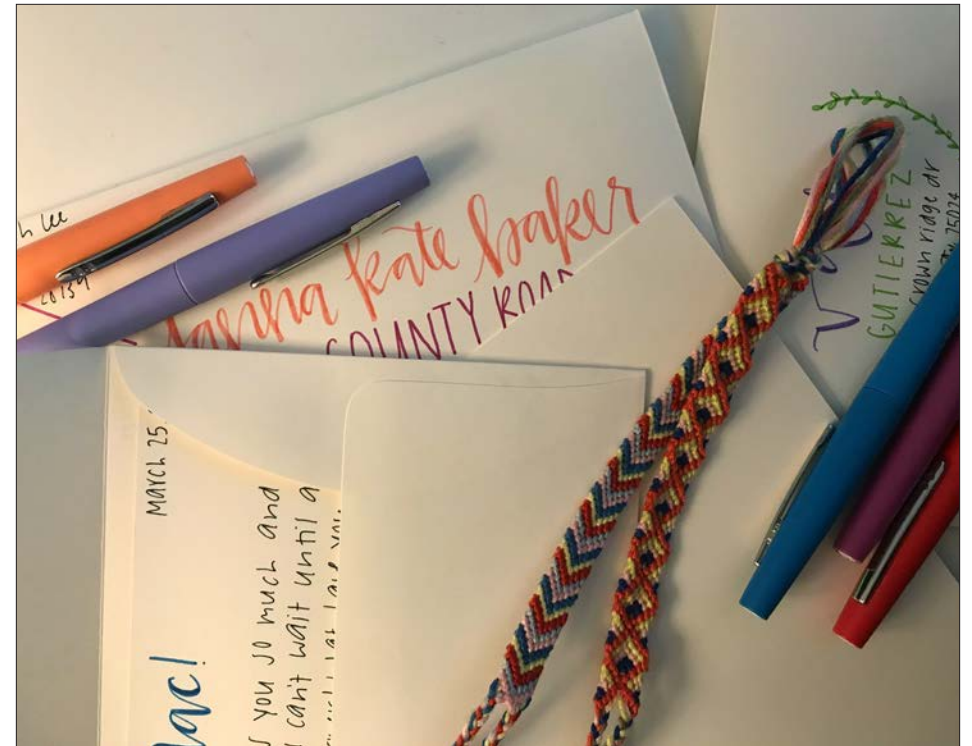
In her personal life, Tsang creates her own gratitude lists because they can bring about change even when only written once a week or so.

“I feel if I try and remember to do it every day, then I get it maybe every other day,” Tsang said. “This changes the way you scan the environment. You’re kind of on the lookout for positive things, and that also affects your well-being.”

Throughout her time interacting with students, Tsang said she often notices their heightened stress. She said she is especially grateful for the expansion of the Baylor Counseling Center after the COVID-19 pandemic.

“One of the biggest changes over the years has been the ability to reduce any type of stigma, and I think students are much more willing to take care of themselves in that way, which I think is great,” Jim Marsh, dean of student health and wellness and executive director for counseling services, said. “It’s what we ought to be doing.”

Marsh said mental health challenges during



Mesha Mittanasala | Photographer

GIFTING GRATITUDE Reflecting on the things you are grateful for is a great way to improve your mental health.

the holiday season look different for every student. Some are able to travel home and get some well-deserved rest, while others may be experiencing trials within their families or are unable to travel home because of the distance.

“For most students, they’re looking forward to [the holidays]. For most students, it’s a break from school. I think it’s a chance to catch up on some sleep. It’s a chance to see family. So I think for many students, it’s a good thing,” Marsh said. “For some, the holidays are not the best time. There are a variety of different challenges that exist — something that’s going on with their family or other challenges associated with the holidays.”

Marsh said he encourages students to practice gratitude throughout the holidays by setting aside time to make gratitude lists and write thank-you cards.

“In general, most people, our culture, we tend to operate from what I’ll call a deficit

model,” Marsh said. “We tend to look at life from what’s wrong or what’s not going well. And we always want to fix that, right? We just do that. We don’t even have to think about it.”

However, Marsh said it is essential to give equal time to “things that are going well.”

“We need to think about it all the time because you have to be intentional to think that way,” Marsh said. “You have to be intentional to think about gratitude. We very naturally go to the other part.”

Marsh said the goal of Student Health and Wellness is to remind students there are many services available to help them take care of their mental well-being.

“We believe there are a lot of things that people can do proactively, upstream if you will, just taking care of their health in general — whether that be good sleep, exercise, whatever that might be — that can be a buffer or protective against other challenges,” Marsh said.

“We need to think about it all the time because you have to be intentional to think that way. You have to be intentional to think about gratitude. We very naturally go to the other part.”

**JIM MARSH |
DEAN OF STUDENT HEALTH
AND WELLNESS**

Getting in holiday spirit as out-of-state students

SHAE WHITTLE
Reporter

The countdown to break is in full swing, as professors assign their final class projects and students pack up their essentials to take home. For out-of-state students, however, it can feel impossible to channel the “home for the holidays” spirit from sometimes over 1,000 miles away.

It may feel as though Thanksgiving feasts and Christmas cookies are reserved for childhood homes, but there’s a long list of things to do in Waco to bring that same hometown feel to Texas.

Don’t be afraid to bring your traditions with you when you return to Waco after Thanksgiving. Go to a local neighborhood to rank the best Christmas light displays, or put up a full-size tree in your apartment and have a decorating party with your roommates. Make a quick trip to Target or Hobby Lobby for a fake tree and some pine-scented air fresheners that will transform your place with the nostalgia of your childhood home.

“I drive around a lot with my friends and look at the Christmas lights. It’s something I do back home, too,” Portland junior Emma Raymond said. “It just feels more homey. It feels more like driving around the neighborhoods to remind you that it’s also a place where families live and a place where people live their lives with their kids, and that also kind of reminds me of home.”

Another key trick to feeling at home during the holidays is to create new traditions,



Kassidy Tsikitas | Photographer

HOLIDAY SPIRIT Baylor gets into the Christmas spirit with a tree in the Paul L. Foster Campus for Business and Innovation.

especially ones that are specific to Baylor and the surrounding Waco area. Nowhere else in the world can you experience Christmas on Fifth, which allows students to view a live Nativity scene, tell Santa all of their Christmas wishes and hear live music with fake snow falling right before their eyes.

After the on-campus festivities, spend a Christmas with Chip and Joanna Gaines at the Magnolia Silos, shopping all of the holiday collections and taking in the decorations. Next, check out Cameron Park Zoo, which decorates the grounds with lights and displays, and pay a visit to downtown Waco’s

three-day celebration of Waco Wonderland Dec. 1-3.

Whether you’re keeping up with old traditions or making new ones, the best thing to do is to be wherever your feet are planted and find joy in those celebrations.

“Just being grateful for the opportunity to have time to relax with family or friends — I think it’s important to do it with both,” Charlotte, N.C., junior Hayden Fox said. “I think a lot of people can overwork during the holidays, like ‘Oh I’ve got to make it perfect for everyone.’ I think everyone should work together to get the stuff done and make it enjoyable for everyone.”

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