

**MAKING MEMORIES AT THE MOVIES – A Guide to Watching at Home**  
**LET'S CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS TOGETHER**

All films in this program have something in common:  
Do you recall seeing these films? Let's spark some memories!

***Neptune's Daughter*** is a 1949 Technicolor musical romantic comedy film starring **Esther Williams, Red Skelton, Ricardo Montalán, Betty Garrett, Keenan Wynn, Xavier Cugat** and **Mel Blanc**.

**Theme:**

Neptune swimming suit design company, aquatic ballet dancer Eve Barrett and partner Joe learn that a South American polo team will be playing a big match in town. Eve tells her man-crazy sister and roommate Betty about the South American team and Betty immediately seizes upon the idea of finding herself a date among the players. Meanwhile, Jose O'Rourke, the handsome playboy captain of the polo team, seeks relief for his injured arm from Jack Spratt, a bumbling masseur, who complains to Jose about his lack of success with women. Eve tries to dissuade her sister from pursuing a romance with any of the visiting polo players. While giving a tour of the Neptune bathing suit factory, Eve meets Jose.

Thinking that her sister has gone on a date with him, she warns him to stay away from her sister. Jose is confused by the warning but because he is attracted to Eve, he pretends to understand and agrees to break his presumed date with Betty.

**We join the film** after Jose has asked Eve to go on the date with him. She reluctantly consents doing so only to prevent him from pursuing her sister. Despite her best attempts to make her date with Jose a failure, Eve finds him attractive and enjoys her evening. **In the meantime, Betty is trying to convince Jack to go out with her. They all sing “Baby It's Cold Outside”.**

**Fun Facts:**

Williams discovered she was pregnant with her first child with husband **Ben Gage** early into shooting.

Loesser wrote the duet **“Baby It's Cold Outside”** in 1944. It went on to win the Academy Award for Best Original Song at the **22nd Academy Awards**. Recently, it has become controversial and at odds with the 'Me Too Movement'.

**Food for Thought:**

Red Skelton was a popular comedian during the 40s, 50s and 60s. Do you have any memories of his radio or TV programs? He often did pantomime and clown skits.

Did you ever have a mix-up on a date? Think that you were dating someone else? Ever go out with twins who switched places?

***Babes in Toyland*** is a **Laurel and Hardy** musical film released on November 30, 1934. The film is also known by the alternate titles **Laurel and Hardy in Toyland**, **Revenge Is Sweet**, and **March of the Wooden Soldiers**.

The movie is based on Victor Herbert's popular 1903 operetta **Babes in Toyland**. Although the film makes use of many of the characters in the original play, as well as several of the songs, the plot is almost completely unlike that of the original stage production. The film's story takes place entirely in Toyland, which is inhabited by Mother Goose and other well-known fairy tale characters.

### **Theme:**

Stannie Dum (Stan Laurel) and Ollie Dee (Oliver Hardy), live in a shoe (as in the nursery rhyme There Was An Old Woman Who Lived In A Shoe), along with Mother Peep (the Old Woman), Bo Peep, a mouse resembling Mickey Mouse (actually played by a live monkey in a costume) and many other children.

The mortgage on the shoe is owned by the villainous Silas Barnaby, who is looking to marry Bo Peep. Ollie offers her all the money he has stored away in his savings can to avoid the marriage, only to learn that Stannie has taken it to buy his favorite toy, peewees.

**We join the film** when Ollie and Stannie set out to get the money for the mortgage from their boss, the Toymaker. Stannie has mixed up an order from Santa Claus, building 100 wooden soldiers at six feet tall, instead of 600 soldiers at one foot tall.

### **Fun Facts:**

A holiday staple, this film was shown by many television stations in the United States during the Thanksgiving/Christmas holiday season, each year, during the 1960s and 1970s. In New York City, it continues to run on WPIX as *March of the Wooden Soldiers*, airing on that station in the daytime on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Stan Laurel (1890–1965) and Oliver Hardy (1892–1957) were established as film comedians prior to their teaming, with Laurel appearing in over 50 silent films and Hardy in over 250. Although they first worked together in the film *The Lucky Dog* (1921), this was a chance pairing and it was not until 1926 when both separately signed contracts with the Hal Roach film studio that they appeared in movie shorts together.

Oliver Hardy died on 7 August 1957. Laurel was too ill to attend his funeral and said, "Babe would understand". People who knew Laurel said that he was devastated by Hardy's death and never fully recovered from his grief. He refused to perform on stage or act in another film without his friend, although he continued to socialize with his fans.

### **Food for Thought:**

What's your favorite Laurel and Hardy movie?

What other comedy teams have you enjoyed? Abbott and Costello, Smothers Brothers, Burns and Allen, Lewis and Martin....

***A Rugrats Chanukah***, titled onscreen as "Chanukah" and sometimes called the "Rugrats Chanukah Special", is a special episode of Nickelodeon's animated television series *Rugrats*.

**Theme:**

This animated story of the Jewish holiday **Chanukah** is seen through the eyes of the Rugrats, who imagine themselves as the main characters. Meanwhile, Grandpa Boris and his long-time rival, Shlomo, feud over who will play the lead in the local synagogue's Chanukah play.

**We join the film** on Chanukah as Grandma Minka reads a book about the meaning of the holiday to the babies Tommy, Chuckie, Phil, and Lil. The babies imagine that they are the story's characters; Judah (Tommy) is outraged by King "Antonica", who has taken over the Jewish kingdom and forced Greek culture on its inhabitants. Judah leads an army of Jewish Maccabees to war against Antonica's Seleucid Empire, emerging victorious. The story is left unfinished as Minka stops to help make latkes in the kitchen with her daughter Didi. We later join the babies listening to the story of Chanukah as it is told by Grandpa Boris and Shlomo.

**Fun Facts:**

Though holiday films are in abundance, the celebration of Chanukah is not seen in many feature films. This version of *Rugrats* remains to be a most special adaptation. **A Rugrats Chanukah** received overwhelmingly positive reviews from television critics and is one of the most popular episodes of *Rugrats* holiday's story series.

**Food for Thought:**

Do you celebrate Chanukah?

What are your favorite memories of Chanukah?

Sometimes we don't think about the meaning of the holiday. Can you think of any miracles in your life?

**White Christmas** is a 1954 American musical romantic comedy film directed by Michael Curtiz and starring **Bing Crosby**, **Danny Kaye**, **Rosemary Clooney**, and **Vera-Ellen**. Filmed in VistaVision and Technicolor, it features the songs of **Irving Berlin**, including a new version of the title song, **White Christmas**, introduced by Crosby in the film *Holiday Inn*.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **Theme:**

On Christmas Eve, 1944, somewhere in Europe, two World War II U.S. Army soldiers, one a Broadway entertainer, Captain Bob Wallace (Bing Crosby), the other an aspiring entertainer, Private Phil Davis (Danny Kaye), perform for the 151st Division. But, word has come down that their beloved commanding officer, Major General Thomas F. Waverly (Dean Jagger), is being relieved of his command. He arrives for the end of the show and delivers an emotional farewell. The men give him a rousing send-off

Bob and Phil perform together after the war and become quite popular. When they go to a club to watch the act ("Sisters"), Phil notices that Bob is smitten with Betty (Rosemary Clooney). Phil has eyes for her sister, Judy (Vera-Ellen).

**We join the film** when Judy and Betty are headed for the Columbia Inn in Pine Tree, Vermont, where they are booked to perform over the holidays. Bob and Phil board the train headed to NYC only to find out that that they must stay up all night in the club car. They are joined by Betty and Judy, who thank them profusely for the tickets (that Phil has secretly gifted) and convince them to come with them to Pine Tree. This is when they sing the song "**Snow**". In the finale, Bob and Betty declare their love for one another, as do Phil and Judy. The background of the set is removed to show the snow falling, everyone raises a glass, and toasts, "May your days be merry and bright; and may all your Christmases be white." They all breakout in song to '**White Christmas**', which becomes associated with the film.

### **Fun Facts:**

The centerpiece of the film is the title song, first used in *Holiday Inn*. Most people do not associate the song **White Christmas** with *Holiday Inn*.

A scene from the film featuring Crosby and Kaye was broadcast the year after the film's release, on Christmas Day 1955, in the final episode of the NBC TV show *Colgate Comedy Hour* (1950–1955).

### **Food for Thought:**

Do you have a special Christmas memory? Can you think of special holiday songs?

Did you ever go away to New England during the winter?

How do you feel about snow? Were you a skier?

Do you recall the *Colgate Comedy Hour*?

***It's a Wonderful Life*** is a 1946 American Christmas fantasy comedy-drama film produced and directed by Frank Capra, based on the short story "The Greatest Gift". The film is considered one of the most loved films in American.

**Theme:**

The film stars **James Stewart** as George Bailey, a man who has given up his dreams in order to help others and whose imminent suicide on Christmas Eve brings about the intervention of his guardian angel, Clarence Odbody, **Henry Travers**. **Donna Reed** stars as George's wife, Mary.

**We join the film** at the beginning of the story, on his brother, Harry's graduation night in 1928. George talks to and becomes smitten by Mary Hatch, who has had a crush on him from an early age. They are interrupted by news of his father's death. George postpones his travel plans in order to sort out the family business, Bailey Brothers' Building and Loan, a longtime competitor to Henry F. Potter, the local banker and the richest man in town. Potter wishes to dissolve the Building and Loan to take over its business.

Later in the film, facing financial ruin and desperation, George wishes he had never been born. Clarence shows him a timeline in which he never existed. Bedford Falls is now Pottersville, an unsavory town occupied by sleazy entertainment venues, crime, and amoral people. The lives George touched are vastly different. Convinced that Clarence is his guardian angel, George returns to the bridge and begs for his life back.

**Fun Facts:**

***It's a Wonderful Life*** is considered one of the greatest films of all time. It was nominated for five Academy Awards, including Best Picture

The story came to the attention of either Cary Grant or RKO producer David Hempstead, who showed it to Grant's agent. In April 1944, RKO Pictures bought the rights to the story for \$10,000, hoping to turn it into a vehicle for Grant. Grant went on to make another Christmas movie staple, **The Bishop's Wife** instead.

**Food for Thought:**

Have you ever danced the Charleston?

Did you have a sweetheart in High School? Or from your hometown? Did you marry him/her?

What's your favorite scene from **It's A Wonderful Life**?

**It's A Wonderful Life** is on TV every Christmas Eve. Do you traditionally watch it?

***Lost piece of I Love Lucy in the episode Drafted***, December 24, 1951.

**Theme:**

Ricky and Fred are going to do a show for the Army troops at Fort Dix in New Jersey. To prevent Lucy from wanting to be in it, they keep the reason they're going a secret. Lucy and Ethel think that Ricky and Fred have been drafted.

This lost piece of **I Love Lucy** originally aired at the end of the episode titled, **Drafted, Drafted** first aired on Christmas Eve 1951, the show included a short Christmas Tag Scene (running just over 3 mins) which has been cut from all subsequent reruns. The Tag Scene featured the four stars dressed up as Santa Claus singing "Jingle Bells" around a Christmas tree. This scene has been restored for the DVD release of "I Love Lucy".

**Fun Facts:**

I Love Lucy is an American television sitcom starring Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz, Vivian Vance, and William Frawley. The black-and-white series originally ran from October 15, 1951 to May 6, 1957 on CBS. After the series ended in 1957, a modified version continued for three more seasons with 13 one-hour specials; it ran from 1957 to 1960. It was first known as The Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Show and later in reruns as The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour.

**Food for Thought:**

How many Santas did you see in this fun clip? What happened to the extra one?

Do you have a favorite I Love Lucy episode?

Do you sing Christmas carols at home? Did you ever go door to door singing carols when you were younger?

Have you ever gotten dressed up for the Holidays?

***When Harry Met Sally*** is a 1989 American romantic comedy film written by Nora Ephron and directed by Rob Reiner. It stars **Billy Crystal** as Harry and **Meg Ryan** as Sally.

**Theme:**

In 1977, Harry Burns and Sally Albright graduate from the University of Chicago and share the drive to New York City, where Sally is beginning journalism school and Harry is starting a career. Harry is dating Sally's friend Amanda. During the drive, Harry and Sally discuss their differing ideas about relationships.

The story follows the title characters from the time they meet just before sharing a cross-country drive, through twelve years or so of chance encounters in New York City. They find themselves attracted to one another, while trying to maintain a friendship, breaking up and getting back together again.

**We join the film** at a New Year's Eve party. Sally feels alone without Harry by her side. Harry spends New Year's alone, walking around the city. As Sally decides to leave the party early, Harry appears and declares his love for her. She argues that the only reason he is there is because he is lonely, but he lists the many things he realized he loves about her. They kiss and marry three months later, exactly 12 years and three months after their first meeting.

**Fun Facts:**

The film raises the question "Can men and women ever just be friends?"

The origins of the film were derived from Rob Reiner's return to single life after a divorce. An interview Ephron conducted with Reiner provided the basis for Harry. Sally was based on Ephron and some of her friends. Crystal came on board and made his own contributions to the screenplay, making Harry funnier. Ephron supplied the structure of the film with much of the dialogue based on the real-life friendship between Reiner and Crystal.

The soundtrack consists of standards performed by Harry Connick Jr., with a big band and orchestra arranged by Marc Shaiman. Connick won his first Grammy Award for Best Jazz Male Vocal Performance. Arrangements and orchestrations on "It Had to Be You",

**Food for Thought:**

How long did you court your spouse before getting married?

How did you meet your spouse? Were you friends first?

Do you sing Auld Lang Syne on New Year's Eve? What does it mean?

*(**Auld Lang Syne** is traditionally sung at the conclusion of New Year gatherings in Scotland and around the world, especially in English-speaking countries.)*