



The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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Welcome to the December 2021 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked to write about their favorite Christmas memory. This topic allowed members to share their thoughts on what Christmas is and how great of a time of year it is. We hope you will take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to learn about our experiences and enjoy our thoughts and opinions in this edition of *The Noodle*!

Believe in yourself!!

Current Members:

John Baldino
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A Christmas with Shamu

My favorite Christmas memory is from when my family went to sea world. We got lost that day and couldn't find the place that we needed to go, so we kept looking for it on the map. A worker there was picking out random people to get free stuff on Christmas, we were chosen to get a free tour of sea world for locking like we were lost.

First, we went to take a tour of the swimming dolphins, we got to feed and pet them. We were able to feed and pet the sting rays because they were close by, but I was too scared to pet them myself because I thought it would sting me. Then we took a break for lunch at the expedition café.

Next, we went to see the dog show it was a cute show because of all the funny animals. There were cats, dogs, rats, and birds, they were all recuse animals. We got to ride the antarctica penguin ride and got to get up close to the penguins. We also got to see a Mantatee rehabilitation area. We saw sea lions and feed them, but you must do it quickly or a pelican will steal the fish right out of your hand.

Last we got to see the Shamu show, we were able to sit up close in the wet zone, I wore a poncho because I don't really like getting wet. I loved the show it was neat.

After seeing the shows, animals, and getting a free tour. I was so excited, I thought it was the best Christmas ever.

By Michelle Sandiford



Christmas on the Big Stage!!


My favorite Christmas was when I was in cast in the play in A Christmas Story!! This was the first time I was cast at a professional theatre. And I was cast as Scut Farkus. I made lifelong friends with the other kids in the cast, did a secret Santa gift exchange, dressed in Christmas PJs for a whole day of tech day, and it was Christmas Day for like 3 months, every day, between rehearsals and shows!!

The friendships formed during that time were great! We keep in touch through social media and texting. It was a fun and great group of kids. We all bought matching t-shirts and went on a photoshoot. We have had several reunions since. We went to Disney parks one day, went bowling another, and out to eat another time. We need to have another reunion because we really aren't kids anymore, we're all teens and practically adults.

We had a Secret Santa gift exchange. My Secret Santa was Scott Forney. He worked backstage. He went way over the top and got me a couple gift cards (Olive Garden and Taco Bell), a shirt that says, "You'll shoot your eye out!" and A Christmas Story mug. I was Secret Santa to Blue Estrella and got her candy and mugs. Blue was the kid handler and assistant stage manager. So, I spent a lot of time with her. She also helped with quick changes. That's when we had to quickly change clothing from one scene to the next and there wasn't enough time to go back to the dressing room because we had to be onstage super quickly. The Secret Santa gift exchange was a fun, little, extra thing to do!

The one day, all the kids in the show wore Christmas PJs to tech day. Tech day is





when the technical side of the show gets added to the acting. Lights, sound, music, and acting all come together. It usually takes the entire day, sometimes longer. I think we went out for lunch on our break to The Whole Enchilada. We stayed in our PJ's. Walked around town. Took photos. We had a blast!

Every day was like Christmas Day! It was so much fun! I got to do fight scenes since I was the bad guy. I was even added to scenes Scut Farkas isn't usually in. So that was cool too! It was a great Christmas that year. A fun Christmas Story.

By JJ Humphrey

To Grandma's we Go!!

When I was growing up Christmas wasn't seen as a big deal in my family Thanksgiving is the holiday where my family takes it seriously. Especially now that we are "all grown up" weirdly I can remember wishing we were like other families who traveled from far and wide to get to "grandma's" house.

We just have never done that until about five years ago when my grandma started getting ill. Then it became time for us as a family to make memories. To laugh together, cry together, and to make time matter. My fondest memory of this time is a few years ago when my mom asked me to come up with something for us all to do. "So, I did... I came up with a "video scavenger hunt" While my family teases me for always allowing the teacher in me to shine I sure did get all



my family together and work hard at beating one another. I mean it was simple things like take a picture with the youngest person and the oldest person in the family. Share a story that only grandma would tell. What began five years ago has taken hold and now captures every big event we have.

This scavenger hunt is talked about and laughed about even though we didn't know it would become one of the things that even my Gram talks about today. It might seem a bit like my favorite memory is a sad one, but it's not and to me it holds to true to any holiday. My favorite memory is one where my family gets together to intentionally make memories. No matter how silly it is one day we will all miss when we could just get together and smile. Every family has their own traditions, inside jokes, and love. At the heart of it, of every holiday is love so whether its Christmas, Thanksgiving, etc. Anytime you get to be with your family you cherish it/smile and take the picture because it might be the one your grandkids one day care close to their hearts.

By Shevie Barnes





How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self-advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at www.floridayouthcouncil.com. The program is open to application year round. We hope to hear from you soon!



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