

# MONTHLY NEWS

December 2024



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*Season's Greetings, From Our House To Yours!*





Binge watching is a favorite past time for some families during the Holidays. Here are some of the top Christmas movies of all time and the streaming networks you can find them on:



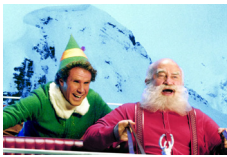
**It's a Wonderful Life (1946)**  
**Amazon Prime**

A heartwarming classic that never gets old and a reminder that Christmas is about more than just presents.



**A Christmas Story (1983)**  
**Amazon Prime**

A school boys obsession of getting a Red Ryder air bb gun for Christmas and trying to convince his family into getting one.



**Elf (2003)**  
**Hulu**

Will Ferrell is the oversized elf who wanders from the North Pole in search of his father.



**How the Grinch Stole Christmas (the original - 1966)**  
**Peacock**

The Dr. Seuss classic of why the Grinch hates Christmas and the most likely reason is that his heart was too small.



**Love Actually (2003)**  
**Netflix**

Portrays different aspects of love as shown through 10 separate stories and individuals whom are interlinked as the plot progresses.



**Bad Santa (2003)**  
**Pluto TV**

Billy Bob Thornton is a disgusting, drunk department store Santa/con man who's out to rob stores on Christmas Eve with his elf sidekick. Parents can watch this after the kids are asleep.



**Home Alone (1990)**  
**Pluto TV**

This one never gets old, even if you have seen it many times. Kevin McCallister is left alone at Christmas and outwits a pair of burglars.



**Miracle on 34th Street (1947)**  
**Disney+**

An oldie but a goodie! A department store Santa claims to be Kris Kringle and convinces innocent kids and adults he's real.



**The Santa Clause (1994)**  
**Disney +**

Tim Allen accidentally kills Santa and has to take his place to save Christmas.

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## Christmas Wreaths

½ cup butter (1 stick)

30 large marshmallows

1 ½ teaspoons green food coloring

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

4 cups cornflakes cereal

2 tablespoons cinnamon red hot candies



*Melt butter and add marshmallows until melted. Add vanilla, food coloring and then cornflakes. Butter your fingers as they get sticky. Immediately place a tablespoon of the cornflakes onto wax paper and form into the shape of a wreath. While still hot, place candies on the cornflakes.*

We now take Apple Pay



## Christmas gift suggestions for Tech Savvy Users

**DJI Neo** - a drone for beginners. This drone can be controlled using any smartphone. Neo is ultra-small and light that sets up in seconds and easy to fly. \$199.00.



**Boox Palma e-reader** - The only hand held e-reader. It's the same size as a typical smartphone, but it relies on a digital ink display that's easy on the eyes. The Palma measures just 6.3 x 3.1 x 0.31 inches and weighs only 6 ounces. The rechargeable battery lasts for several weeks. \$280.00.



**The Plaud NotePin** - Whether you are a student or a business person this device transcribes accurately and is easy to use. Plaud NotePin uses Chat GPT-4.0 and Claude 3.5. Can record up to 20 hours per charge or uses standby for up to 40 days. \$169.00 at Plaud.



**Anker MagGo 3-in1 phone charging station** - For someone who already has an Apple iPhone, Apple Watch and AirPods, this 3-in-1 charger is ideal for reducing cable clutter. It's fully MagSafe compatible and folds for easy transport. When folded, this device is about the same size as a deck of playing cards. \$110.00.



**The Oura ring** - Many smartphones and smartwatches come equipped with sensors to monitor various aspects of health, such as sleep patterns, stress levels and daily activity. However, these devices can be bulky and not always convenient to carry. The Oura ring is a stylish 24/7 health tracker worn on your finger. It can monitor sleep, workouts, and more, with a battery life of up to a week. \$299.00 at Oura.



**Skylight frame** - The perfect gift for the not so tech savvy person. Once it's connected to Wi-Fi anyone can view photos from anywhere in the world. This is the perfect gift for parents or grandparents. \$140.00



*Most of these gifts can be found on Amazon.*



*Stop by our office and get one of VernonCom's 2025 calendars while they last! It displays photos from our 2024 "Heart of the Driftless" photo contest. Take a look at some of the talented photographers in our area and their artwork.*

## Online Holiday Shopping Tips

*The convenience of shopping online has made Christmas shopping easy. Here are some tips to stay safe and feel secure in making your purchases.*

**Check your devices** - Before making any online purchases, make sure the devices you're using online, are up-to-date. Stay current with back ups and software updates.

Use different complex passwords for each device. Consider using a password manager.

Check the device privacy and security settings to make sure you understand how your information will be used and stored.

**Only shop trusted sources** - Think about how you are searching online. Are you searching from home, or on public Wi-Fi? How are you finding deals? Are you clicking on links in emails, ads or webpages? If it looks suspicious, something is probably not right.

Before providing any personal or financial information, make sure you are interacting with a reputable, established vendor.

Verify the legitimacy before supplying any information. If you have never heard of it, check twice before handing over your information

Don't connect to unsecure public Wi-Fi, especially when doing banking or shopping.

**Use safe methods for purchases** - Be wary of emails requesting personal information. Attackers may attempt to gather information by sending emails requesting that you confirm a purchase or account information.



## Business Spotlight



### Snowy Ridge Christmas Tree Farm

This month we are recognizing one of Westby's most adored seasonal businesses, Snowy Ridge Christmas Tree Farm. Snowy Ridge is a family owned, family run business that started in 1989 by Jeff and Moira Hastings, on the idea that it would help pay for their children's education. This local gem provides a beautiful variety of fresh Christmas trees, tasty treats, and family fun. They'll even shake, bail, and tie the tree on your car!

When the Hastings first moved to the area for Jeff's job, they didn't have any plans to create a tree farm. But with the old tobacco lots on their property and wanting their kids to learn valuable life lessons, the idea blossomed. At first, Snowy Ridge operated on a smaller scale due to several competitors in the area, but through word of mouth they grew to what they are today. The Snowy Ridge Christmas Tree Farm that was initially comprised of 800 trees, has now snowballed into 15,000 trees total.

Throughout the 30 years they've been in business they've dealt with complications such as bees, rodents, and weather. Maintaining such a high volume of trees requires a lot of hard work and dedication, especially if you are sheering acres of trees by hand! Some may not realize, the farm isn't just a winter hobby, it is a year-round commitment. Just last spring, Jeff and Moira planted 2,600 trees, with 800 trees projected to be sold again this holiday season.

Snowy Ridge is popular for their welcoming atmosphere and gorgeous selection of Canaan Fir, Fraser Fir, White Pine and more. If you are looking for a Christmas tree and a fun family outing in the outdoors; visit the farm and enjoy the zipline, bonfire, and crafts, provided by Carol and Sharon Oldenburg, while sipping on hot cocoa! This local establishment has become a holiday tradition for families during the holidays.



Snowy Ridge Christmas Tree Farm opens every year the day after Thanksgiving and continues to be open every Friday-Sunday from 9 am-dusk, through December 22nd. Self-serve option is available Monday-Thursday. Check our Facebook page for a chance to win a holiday wreath from the tree farm.

## Employee News

The Viroqua Chamber hosted their annual wine walk and VernonCom sponsored the event. Some of the 15 local businesses stayed open past their regular business hours and served wine and charcuterie boards. The walk began at Nelson Agri-Center and then attendees moved on to the other destinations in throughout the city.



### Halloween Fun



It was cold and windy for Halloween, but VernonCom employees made the most of it! It was Trunk or Treat for businesses in both Westby and Viroqua, so the little ones had just one stop to brave the cold.

### Employee Recognition



Todd Tunks received a one year service award after relocating for 7 years. Todd was previously employed by VernonCom for 19 years and moved back to the area. Todd oversees the Installation and Repair, Construction and Engineering departments.



103 N Main Street  
Westby, WI 54667

#### Lobby Hours:

8:00 am - 4:30 pm  
(M-F)  
(608) 634-3136  
www.vernoncom.  
coop



#### Payment Options

Go To: [www.vernoncom.coop](http://www.vernoncom.coop)  
and click "Pay Now"  
Call (844) 827-4766  
(Have your account number)  
EFT (Automatic Payment) - Sign  
up and get a one time \$5.00 credit.