

Reviewer: Hulu chose charm over quantity with *Happiest Season*

COMPOST,
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By TJ Reid
For the Keizertimes

Do you want to know one of the most insane things that I have ever read? That in 2020 alone, Hallmark released 40 new Christmas movies. Forty. In one year. I am 90% sure that I couldn't name 20 Christmas movies period without including films that aren't really Christmas movies (*Die Hard*, for instance) and by cheating (go ahead and add a random noun to the phrase "The Christmas..." a movie with that name already exists somewhere, even if you've never heard of it). The vast majority of these are akin to comfort food; nice to indulge in every once in a while (especially during the holidays), but also lacking substance and, more often than not, full of cheese. Thankfully, *Happiest Season* on Hulu has the cast and the charm to elevate what could have easily been "just another Christmas" movie into something mildly nutritious.



Submitted
Kristen Stewart and Mackenzie Davis play Abby and Harper in Hulu's *Happiest Season*.

review

The plot is far from complicated; Kristen Stewart and Mackenzie Davis play Abby and Harper, a couple who, while visiting Harper's family for the holidays, must deal with the hijinks and genuine problems that arise from Harper's fear and inability to come out to her ultra-conservative parents. It feels like a plot that should have happened a long time ago (and didn't necessarily have to hap-

pen during Christmas), yet it doesn't feel terribly original all the same. Perhaps it's because "introducing the significant other to the wacky family" plot has been done to death already, or may-

be it's because people returning to their hometown for Christmas in general is such a well-worn staple of holiday movies? Who knows. The dialogue is also not great at times; characters occasionally throw background information into conversations where it doesn't really belong, for instance, and

there were a few word choices here and there that raised my eyebrows. But whenever the script has a slight sag, the cast, which also includes impressive names such as Aubrey Plaza, Dan Levy, and Alison Brie, more than adequately prop it

up and keeps any flaws from being too noticeable.

And these saggy moments are, in reality, pretty rare. I honestly only noticed the above problems once or twice, and the rest of the time everything was just fine and dandy. There is a lot of charm in *Happiest Season*, and everyone involved seems to have brought their A-game. There are no clear standouts in a cast as good as this, although I must say that Mary Holland (who also co-wrote the script) as Harper's offbeat sister Jane and Dan Levy as Abby's loyal best friend (and fish murderer) John were easily the most fun. It is, all-in-all, a very well put-together Christmas movie that would have been just as comfortable on the big screen as it is on the small one.

A cheery good time with a couple of good messages and a few more laughs... I guess that's all anyone can ask of their holiday comfort food. Eat up.

Happiest Season is now available on Hulu.

proposing that the council and Keizer Planning Commission consider a text amendment that would permit such facilities.

The council approved moving forward at its Dec. 7 meeting and the planning commission will likely begin its discussions at its Jan. 13 meeting.

There will eventually be public hearings on the matter in both venues, but nothing is set in stone.

A text amendment would permit a composting development "but also to determine what kind of sideboards the city wants to put in place such as design standards," said Shane Witham, interim director of the Keizer development department.

"As long as we can alleviate the smell associated with something like a mushroom factory, then it's something we should look into," said Councilor Dan Kohler.

Councilor Kim Freeman said she understood the caution in bringing the matter to the public arena, but that doing so had other benefits.

"It is exciting to hear of potential things that could come to Keizer, and it's also good for residents to know that the city staff is working to bring businesses to the city. I hope it comes to fruition," she said.

Mayor Cathy Clark noted that having a facility near Oregon's wine country would also reduce the transportation emissions associated with getting good soil to area wineries.

City park survey closes Dec. 31

The City of Keizer is updating its Parks Master Plan and residents are encouraged to fill out an online survey that will inform how local parks are developed into the future.

The survey can be found at bit.ly/KeizerParks. Anyone who completes the survey will be entered to win a \$50 gift card. The survey closes on Dec. 31.

As much as what residents would like to see in their local park, Keizer Public Works Director Bill Lawyer wants to know what type of offerings are desired in a recreation program.

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WorshipDirectory

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380 Churchdale Ave N (1 block West of Dutch Bros)
503-393-0222 • KeizerCommunityChurch.com

SUNDAY:
Sermons can be found online at www.keizercommunitychurch.com

WEDNESDAY:
6:30 pm Awana; Youth Group; Adults

JOIN US FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP
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PEOPLESCHURCH
4500 LANCASTER DR NE | SALEM
503.304.4000 • www.peopleschurch.com

SAINT EDWARD Catholic Church
393-5323

5303 River Rd. N., Keizer
Father Gary L. Zerr, Pastor
Saturday Vigil Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.
Sundays: 8:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
La Misa en Español: 12:30 p.m.

KEIZER CLEAR LAKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
a member of Open Door Churches of Salem-Keizer

REV. ALYSSA BAKER, Lead Pastor
Services are Sunday at 10 am (Nursery & Sunday School for Children)
7920 Wheatland Rd N • 503-393-2402 • www.kclumc.org

Faith Lutheran Church, ELCA
4505 River Road N, Keizer • 503-393-4507
www.FLCKeizer.org

Pastor Linda Matz Easterling
Sunday School - 9:00 am
Worship Service - 10:00 am

Keizer Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

6945 Wheatland Rd. NE 393-6843
www.KeizerChristian.org

Worship and Children's Church • 10:00 a.m.
Office Hours 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Mon. - Fri.

9:30 am & 11:00 am Sunday Worship Services

COUNTRYSIDE Christian Church

countrysidechristianchurch.org
Corner of Lockhaven and McLeod, KEIZER • (503) 540-1989

John Knox Presbyterian Church
452 Cummings Lane North • 393-0404

Pastor Peter Blank
Worship - 10:30 a.m.
Education Hour - 9:15 a.m.
Nursery Care Available
www.JohnKnoxPresKeizer.org