

Winter driving safety tips

Sophia James
The Lion's Roar

As you get up to grab your backpack after finishing your last bites of cereal, you take a quick glance at the clock that puts you in a state of panic as you realize school starts in 15 minutes and you haven't even left yet. From that moment on, your mission becomes getting to school before the tardy bell rings to avoid a talk with a teacher that leads to you that ugly late slip. You hastily start your car, turn defrost on full blast, put it in drive and pray there isn't a cop around as you pull out. Little did you know that not only had it rained late last night but that it had also dropped below freezing leaving the roads covered in ice. As you accelerate down a normally safe road you notice that your car seems to be sliding a bit more than usual but you continue the speed. As you round the next corner, you car hits a patch of ice and suddenly you find yourself sliding into oncoming traffic. Losing control of a vehicle after you believed you were doing everything correct can be extremely traumatizing but moreover dangerous. Sometimes we get lucky enough to gain control of our vehicle before it gets really bad. Then there are others times where those situations end up in car damage, injury and even death. In the winter especially, weather related accidents are so common that in the U.S. alone we lose an average of 100 people per day, not to mention the amount of injuries that also come from

it. One of the biggest components of this problem is that 70 percent of America's roads are located in snowy regions. What this means for you, is that more than likely if you plan on doing any driving in the winter, you will be dealing with dangerous road conditions.

Living in Oregon has given most of us the privilege of not having to deal with as much snow as other states, but rain is very common. It could sound pretty chill compared to a snowy road but it has its fair share of surprising dangers. Some of these dangers include poor visibility, hydroplaning, fog and ice. Since you will definitely be seeing some if not all of these rain related road conditions, let's familiarize ourselves with them. The most common one of these all is poor visibility, which can cause lots of problems like not being able to see pedestrians, signs, or even stalled cars. If you begin to experience this make sure your headlights are on, that you are driving at a speed that you can easily control while keeping your focus on the road. Hydroplaning is when your car's tires lose traction with the pavement leading the vehicle to sliding on the rain water. It can be very dangerous and the best way to avoid it is to just take your time on the road. Also, don't your hit the brakes or the gas very hard even if you feel like the car is losing control. Fog is scary because you lose almost all your visibility and turning on your brights does not make it better. The best way to deal with fog is

to drive at a very controlled speed with headlights on but no brights because it will reflect off the water droplets in the air. The next treacherous road condition is ice which is known for causing several accidents as well as many deaths per year. If it can be helped try to avoid it or use extreme caution when driving on or near it. If necessary to drive on it, go very slowly but furthermore, make sure not to hit the gas or the brakes hard. Keep in mind that steering smoothly along with not jerking the wheel is essential to maintaining control. Unfortunately ice can sometimes not be seen which is when it can be most dangerous. This is called black ice known for blending in with its surroundings. Since it is unpreventable to sometimes hit a patch of it, the best thing to do is to pay attention to the weather before going out. If temperatures are extremely low along with the roads looking icy, then just take it easy on the roads.

It also wouldn't be a bad idea to equip your car with snow chains, a first aid kit, a blanket, water and snacks. It sounds overboard but if you find yourself stranded out in freezing temperatures for a few hours, you will probably change your mind. Taking driving seriously especially in winter conditions is very important. If you feel uncomfortable with the roads, it's okay to pull over or ask for help. The purpose of this information was not meant to scare you, just to inform you.

CGHS grad comes back to her roots

Kyle Trullinger
The Lion's Roar

New staff members are joining Cottage Grove High School, and so far it's been great for the former student and new teacher Taylor Boxberger. Staff is a big part of what makes Cottage Grove High School so unique and why students always seem to find success here. Boxberger is a 24-year-old teacher at Cottage Grove High School. She teaches Language Arts for juniors and seniors and also teaches a freshman math lab class. Boxberger originally wanted to be a nurse, but once she got to help coach the track team here at Cottage Grove, she realized how much she loves being with high schoolers, and that gave her the inspiration to start teaching. Her experience here has been great. "It's been really rewarding and fun to teach at a school that I went to as a high schooler," said Boxberger. She's built good relationships with all the staff because she already knew most of them. It's a comfortable feeling for her going back to a place she was six years ago. Being a student here and being a staff member six years later

is a big jump, but she doesn't know which is better because she loved being a student and misses being one, but she loves teaching and building new relationships with staff and students. She's felt very welcomed and comfortable. She finds teaching here at Cottage Grove fun because she's getting a whole new perspective, and she finds it cool that she's working with people that used to teach her. Those teachers are now her friends and co-workers. It's different, but she's enjoying it. Her favorite high school memories were getting ready for homecoming week. She loved being involved with the skits, football games and just other fun homecoming activities. She finds Mr. Wells to be the most helpful and welcoming because she took over his classes at the start of the year. "He's helped me a lot and made my life here a lot easier," said Boxberger. Being a high school teacher gives her all the memories she missed, right back. For Boxberger it's about reliving the high school experience and helping young students succeed.

Pride break giving CGHS students a little more time in the mornings



Justin Francis
The Lion's Roar

Cottage Grove High School has recently incorporated a new system, known as pride break, into the daily schedule. After 2nd period, students are given an extended break that gives them a chance to get a snack before returning to class. "I think it's beneficial, because it gives kids who didn't get to eat breakfast, or just don't like eating that early in the morning a chance to do so," said Emma Sexton a Senior at Cottage Grove High School. Through this students have another opportunity to eat in the mornings with snack bags, cheese rolls and smoothies being served in various locations

around the school. "I can feel a difference in the energy. Not only are the kids able to get a snack they also get to relax so they can be fresh for the next couple of classes," said Ricardo Florez the Business Teacher at Cottage Grove High School. "There's research that shows you can only spend a certain amount of time working before you need a mental break, otherwise you just can't concentrate as well. They come into 3rd and 4th period looking pretty refreshed. So I feel like it's been good for students." Cottage Grove High School's new principal, Mike Ingman introduced and implemented Pride Break into the schedule. "We had some significant issues around students not eat-

ing breakfast, and there's a lot of research that says that your academic performance will decrease if you haven't had breakfast," said Ingman. Through the enactment of Ingman's Pride Break initiative breakfast sales have increased with only one minute being taken from each period throughout the school day. "I think it gives both teachers and students a chance to take a break in the morning, have a snack, and socialize a little bit," said Ingman. "Overall from my perspective as the new guy it's been a positive change. I haven't heard a single person say anything negative about it. It sounds like something that people really like to have." Pride Break is not the only initiative that Ingman hopes to implement at the high school, but he believes it is essential to work with the students and staff of Cottage Grove High School to make the changes they see as important to them. "I'm not somebody that's going to create a whole bunch of change for change sake. I'm probably the least important person in the building," said Ingman, "Teachers and students are way more important than me so they will help to drive any major changes in the foreseeable future."



Illustration by CGHS Student Isis Becerra-Aguilar

A plea to fans: We need to relax about *The Last Jedi*

Cody McMurray
The Lion's Roar

Star Wars: The Last Jedi earned \$220 million in its opening weekend, and has earned an additional \$3 million since then, at the time of writing this, it's obvious that this film has brought great success to everyone involved on the project from a numbers standpoint, and on multiple movie reviewing websites, such as Rotten Tomatoes, critics are praising the film very highly. Fans on the other hand are much more torn on the their thoughts on the film, which is the reason this article now exists.

I believe this divide exists because of a mindset fans have grown to have about the film industry. *Star Wars* is a title recognized by many, and it also holds a special place in many lives. The original film was released 1977, meaning *Star Wars* has been in the minds of some since they were children. To say the expectations for this film were high would be a massive understatement, and this is where the problem lies. Because the expectations for this film were astronomical, everyone had an idea of what they wanted from the film, and if the film didn't provide what they asked of it, they didn't

like it. That isn't to say all criticisms are invalid either; it simply says that this caused long time fans of the series to be hyper focused on the issues with the film; however, this is only one side of the issue.

On the other end, people feel such a passion for the franchise that they ignore flaws that may exist within film, because they feel they are obligated to be loyal to something that has been in their lives for so long. This is a problem when measuring how good a film actually is. With all of this bias, it is difficult to actually get down to the quality of the different elements in the film itself, and this presents a very interesting problem in the film industry. *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* is competently made. Visually the movie is stunning, with a salt covered planet being some great eye-candy for the final act. The action scenes are well choreographed, and most of them hold enough entertainment value to keep the average viewer occupied. The problems for most mainly lie in the script, and this is the piece that has led many fans to be so divided. Without getting into spoilers, major plot points seemed implausible to some, and it really pulled them out of them movie.

Other issues have to do with general personal opinions on what the movie should've included, and what should've been left out. This is the thing that needs to be changed. When creating a product for others to enjoy, the negative criticisms are paid much more attention to than the positive ones. Creating a wave of hate around a final product could potentially stop creators from wanting to try anything new. If something doesn't work out as well as they thought, they shouldn't be hit with a barrage of hate from fans. If this pattern continues, creators won't feel the drive to contribute to these types of big franchises. They should feel excited to leave their mark on a project, and not terrified of the hate they could potentially receive. Films such as, *Batman v.s Superman: Dawn of Justice* have gone through the same issues. It's okay to have a negative opinion of something, but I think people have forgotten that there are actual people behind these films that put a lot of time and effort into them.

We as fans need to realize that not everything is going to be perfect, but creating an aura of fear around those working on projects such as these, is the opposite of what we want.



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