

[00:00:00] <Music>

Annie: Hi friends, welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun on a Thursday, I know. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm really happy to be here with you today. We have got a great show in store. It's day one of our 2021 at Christmas Party and we're kicking off 12 days of podcasting Christmas. We've got 12 days in a row of awesome guests coming at you.

Think of it as our little podcast version of a Christmas party. Where we're all mingling around having a great time and pausing to have a chat with new friends here and there. I think you're going to absolutely love the lineup we have ready for you this year. Can you hear me smiling? I am so thrilled about this year's Christmas party. And you can always go back and listen to the Christmas parties of the past year even more holiday-themed conversations.

All the fun Christmas parties have the best soundtracks and the music you're hearing in the background is from our friends for King and Country. It's their version of "Little Drummer Boy" from the album *A Drummer Boy Christmas*, make sure you check that out. And don't you know, we'll be keeping the party going even past the holiday.

So we'll take this podcast back out on tour in February and March. We have so much fun planned for those nights, you guys. Comedy, fun-coaching, special guests, and a live podcast recording. Be sure to go to anniefdowns.com/events for all the details and to get your tickets, if you're gifting tickets. Remember, we've even got a little printable available that you can print out to give the person you're bringing on tour.

I can't wait to see you out on the road, y'all, we just cannot wait. And just a reminder that the big guy himself, Santa Claus, will be taking a break from his busy December schedule to stop by the studio like he has the last couple of years. If you got any questions for him, we are definitely doing a Q&A episode and I'll be happy to pass those along. Just follow the link in the show notes to send in your questions or even questions from the mini BFFs in your household. We have voice or text options available for you and I cannot wait to hear what jolly old St Nick has in store for us this year.

Before we dive in, I want to take a moment share about one of our incredible partners and friends, Stephanie May Wilson. You may be familiar with Stephanie, as she's the host of The Girls Night podcast and author of the Lipstick Gospel.

Well, Stephanie recently came out with a beautiful new prayer journal called *The Between Places: 100 Days to Trusting God When You Don't Know What's Next*. And it's perfect for any woman who's navigating any sort of uncertainty about her future. It's for the woman who's not married yet and wondering if she's ever going to find her person. And for the woman who's dating someone and wondering if this person is her long-term person. It's for the women who have worked in the same career

for several years now and it's left her absolutely sure that this is not what she wants to do for the rest of her life. Which brings up the question, what does she want to do?

It's for the woman who's wondering if she's ready to have a baby. And also for the woman who's trying to grow her family and finding it can be a lot harder than we sometimes imagine. It's also for the woman who's just feeling the weight of uncertainty in this season we're all in, collectively, right now. Feeling like the whole world is kind of turned upside down. Taking her plans and sense of security right along with it.

Through 100 guided prayer prompts *The Between Places* will help you live today with more contentment. Step into the future with more courage and faith and rest in God's peace, knowing that He's with you every step of the way. To pick up a copy of this beautiful keepsake prayer journal, just head to stephaniemaywilson.com and if you use the promo code ANNIE you'll get 15% off. Again that stephaniemaywilson.com and the promo code for 15% off is ANNIE.

Today on the show as in years past, we'll get all the way into the world of Hallmark Christmas Movies with my friends, Jen and Jami and there is some drama this year. Y'all know we got to talk about it. But then we're also going to bring in Bran, Panda, and Daniel to complete our panel of experts.

Well, their actual names are Brandon Gray, Daniel "Panda" Pandolph, and Daniel Thompson. They're three best friends and dads from South Carolina, and they're the hosts of the Deck the Hallmark podcast and authors of *I'll Be Home for Christmas Movies*. I mean, y'all could there be any better friends for us to chat with about our love for Hallmark movies? Y'all are not ready for it, you're going laugh and enjoy these new friends.

Even if Christmas Hallmark Movies aren't your thing, I think you're going to have fun with this one. And we're going to play a game and if you want to play along, the draft card is on my Insta story and it is on the Deck the Hallmark Insta story so grab it, screenshot itm play along with us. Here's my conversation with Jen and Jamie and Bran, and "Panda", and Daniel from Deck The Hallmark.

[00:04:38] <Music>

Annie: Ladies, welcome back. Jen and Jami.

Jen Thanks for having us again, Annie.

Jami What year is this? Is this year five, four?

Annie: Okay, let's back up last year, Nikki DeLoach joined us so that was our Hallmark conversation in 2020. 2019 was Candace, did Candace join us?

Jen She's she did it, but we were not in the podcast.

Annie: And our friends are yelling at us.

Jen Nikki was the first one that we were in the interview with.

Annie: Oh, right. You met Alicia Wet the first year?

Jen Right, but we weren't in the interview.

Annie: You weren't actually in the interview.

Jen Alicia Wet was the first year.

Jami Oh no the year before we had no one, we were the stars.

Annie: Oh right.

Jen Christmas at Dolly, I'm sorry.

Annie: Oh, that's right. Christmas at Dolly.

Jen 2019 was Christmas at Dolly, 2018 would have been Candace, 2017 would have been Alicia-

Annie: Alicia Wet. So this is year five. Wow, half a decade of doing the work of the Lord, half a decade. We got to start, this is an exciting episode. We've never had dudes on to talk about Hallmark-

Jen And a lot of them.

Annie: Yeah, three of them. This is going to be a loud table, I would say. The Deck the Hallmark dudes are about to join us. But first, there's some hot gossip, some hot gos, as we say around here about what's going on in the Hallmark/Lifetime/GAC Christmas movie world, someone go.

Jami Should we call it the CMU like instead of the Marvel Christmas Movie Universe-

Annie: Yes, that's exactly right. This is the CMU, we just founded it. Yeah.

Jen Trademarked it.

Annie: This is the CMU, yes.

Jen Well, GAC family. Does anyone remember, GAC? Wasn't it mostly-

Jami It was music videos.

Annie: That was mystery right?

Jen I think it was sort of the competitor to CMT.

Annie: Yeah.

Jami They now have a family channel.

Annie: Okay, so this isn't GAC, it's GAC Family?

Jami Yeah.

Jen It's a separate channel and Bill Abbott who came from Hallmark, he is now running GAC Family. He's the one that rebranded-

Annie: He left Hallmark?

Jen Yes.

Annie: And now-

Jen It was kind of in as Hallmark was being pressured into maybe becoming slightly more liberal, open, diverse, whatever word you want to use.

Annie: But we're not talking about racially we're talking about a lot of other ways.

Jen All the ways. All the ways.

Annie: Okay. Yeah.

Jen They were to be more inclusive, that's the word, inclusive.

Annie: Okay. And, so, he was removed or left we don't know, hot gossip, again.

Jen He left.

Annie: He left.

Jen And he has now I don't know if poached is the right word or invited or welcomed-

Annie:Wow, hot takes early. Hot takes early.

Jen He welcomed a lot of Hallmark actors and actresses that we've come to see all the time. And may have now signed contracts to be on GAC Family exclusively.

Jami This feels like old Hollywood where you are signed to, like back in the day.

Annie:Like MGM.

Jami Yes, you were signed to MGM or you were signed to Paramount. Now actors can kind of work wherever the job is coming.

Annie:Yes.

Jami But I think, again, this is hot gossip and this is complete speculative, is that the right-

Annie:It is.

Jami Okay, great, that they are signed to an exclusive. It sounds like if they move to GAC they can no longer do for Hallmark movies for the time of their contract, I think. And it sounds like a lot of the contracts are starting in January. Because some of them have Hallmark movies-

Jen And GAC.

Jami And GAC and then next year we'll really see who-

Jen So there's some room for some new leads in the Hallmark world so that's what's going to sound like.

Annie:Yeah, y'all go for it?

Jen Call me Hallmark. My backside made it elevated Christmas at Dollywood in a way that it probably wouldn't have been the same had you not seen the back of my coat for three seconds. Just saying.

Annie:I mean, I really hoped we would be in another one by now. You know, what if Hallmark doesn't call us for '22, let's call GAC Family.

Jami Let's call Nikki.

Annie:Let's call them. Nikki DeLoach, let's just ring her and say, "Have us. Have us."

Jami Yeah.

Annie:Okay, we'll do that.

Jami I do think they've still had pretty high protocol, like COVID protocol, so it feels like-

Annie:That's why we didn't get the invite.

Jami ...it's tougher to just like, but anyway [Crosstalk 00:08:53] people.

Jen Yes, getting into Canada has not been a thing.

Annie:Right. So my biggest hope is that in 2022 we will, because we've seen also not only have the stars moved over. But like even Cameron and Debbie from Home and Family are doing stuff on GAC.

Jami Because Home and Family is now gone. It's Bubbly Sesh isn't right?

Annie:Yeah, Bubbly Sesh. Hallmark no longer has the podcast though, I think Jacks and Shawl are still doing things.

Jami Yeah, yeah. But part of the new regime at Hallmark has removed some of the like things that are not movies.

Annie:Yes. So before we invite in the Deck the Hallmark guys, tell me one movie you've watched so far this year That is a must watch? What's your must watch up to this point?

Jen Well another quick hot take is that I haven't loved the movie so far this year.

Annie:I know that is a hot take from you. That's a hot take.

Jen However, I would say *Gingerbread Miracle*.

Jami Oh, that was cute.

Jen I'll tell you what that's the cutest one so far and I thought it just kind of felt like a classic Hallmark Romcom holiday movie.

Annie: Yeah.

Jen Where the others just didn't quite live up to my expectations of that.

Annie: Uh-huh.

Jen There was also one on Hallmark Movies and Mysteries that I liked *Christmas in My Heart*, that one was sweet too. I don't know if you watched that one.

Annie: Give me something about *Christmas in My Heart*?

Jen It's Luke MacFarlane. He is a country music star. He is not a country star. I bless him, I like him, I think he is great. Him trying to be a country person with a real southern accent missed the mark in my heart.

Jen Accents aren't the best. Anyway, his wife had died, he's moved back to West Virginia.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Jen His daughter starts taking music lessons from this woman and they may or may not fall in love.

Annie: And who knows what happens? Who knows what happens next?

Jen Who knows.

Jami It was just sweet. My two favorites; one, The Hallmark Channel would be *Coyote Creek Christmas*.

Jami Oh, I liked that one too.

Annie: Coyote Creek?

Jen I think, was that the name? Ryan Paevey, of course.

Annie: Of course, of course. Your Ryan Paevey is my Brendan Penny he does no wrong.

Jami No.

Annie: Favorite movie of the year, it doesn't matter.

Jami Also, he played a dad in it.

Annie: You loved it or you loved Ryan Paevey and the dad?

Jami I did. I did. I did. And then my other favorite was *Next Stop, Christmas*. But not but, because it has Doc Brown and Lorraine Back to the Future.

Annie: Wait, both of them?

Jami: Yes.

Annie: Jami?

Jami And we are a *Back to the Future* family.

Annie: Uh-huh.

Jami It was my brother's favorite movie when he was four because I'm seven years older, and I would force him to watch it.

Annie: Certainly.

Jami And so it's a girl who is on a train home for Christmas and Christopher Lloyd plays the train conductor. It sends her back in time 10 years-

Annie: Oh, time travel-

Jami And then there-

Jen And I didn't hate this one.

Jami Yeah, and then it's her and her like childhood best friend kind of finding their way to each other, which I also love, I like best friends that accidentally fall off, like that's my favorite type of storyline. So *Next Stop, Christmas*. What a dream-

Annie: Next Stop, Christmas.

Jami That was one of my hot takes was I didn't hate that time travel.

Annie: Yeah, because you really don't like the time travel-

Jen I really don't like time travel.

Annie: No you do not.

Jen Can I tell you why? I just don't ever like them.

Annie: Yes, you do not like them.

Jen I would say, on the whole, I do. I haven't loved all of them in The Hallmark world but I would say, as a whole in the entertainment world, I like time travel things.

Annie: Okay, I do too. Candace has a time travel one I really liked.

Jen Oh, that was with Oliver Hudson.

Annie: Yeah, yeah. Okay, my hot take is I haven't watched a single one yet. I don't think I've watched a single one yet. My app, I need to open the app, once I get going on the app, then I feel pressured and I want to check things off in a box.

Jami Well, I think there's something, I don't know, I feel-

Annie: No.

Jami So you just have to reached out into the ether and try and pull some down party air on all the time.

Jen So you can-

Annie: Yes, certainly I'm not super worried.

Jen Yeah, but I just feel like no one is really I mean, people are getting there, but like it came so early it felt like. It was before Halloween, people were preparing for Christmas spirit. If we didn't have this podcast, I probably would not have watched a single one yet either, hot take.

Annie: I really appreciate that. Yes, I am surprised they started a week earlier. How many new ones are there this year on Hallmark alone?

Jen There's three every weekend.

Annie: Okay.

Jen And then next week there'll be 40.

Annie: Y'all said 44?

Jami But I don't know if that's between Movie and Mystery Channel and Hallmark? Because Movie and Mystery has one new one a weekend and Hallmark has three. I'm sorry. On Thanksgiving weekend there were five new ones.

Annie: Yeah, okay. Wow. Okay, that's a lot. But they are playing all the time?

Jen Correct. 24/7 you can watch a Hallmark Christmas Movie.

Annie: Great. Okay, say the title of the one you like the most again? Ginger Bread?

Jen Ginger Bread Miracle.

Annie: Is there, what's my little series I like so much, *Godwink* is there a Godwink this year?

Jami I think there is.

Jen I think there is.

Annie: I do love a Godwink, comma, I also love Godwink Christmas but I also do love with Godwink.

Jami Yes. Airs December 11th.

Annie: Oh, today is the 9th that means on Saturday we get our... oh, that's great. That's great. That's why y'all are kicking off a series, have y'all ever kicked off the 12 Days of Christmas before? I don't think we've ever started with Hallmark?

Jen Honestly, I think you usually save the best for last, so we're towards the end typically.

Annie: This year, by the way, this is good point to say the last episode of the 12 Days of Christmas is a Q&A with Santa Claus. So there's a link in the show notes-

Jami Is there a place to submit questions?

Annie: There's the link in the show notes today and every day up until we record with Santa for adults and children alike to submit their questions.

Jen Okay, I have a few logistical ones I'll be-

Annie: I wish you would. I wish you would. He has all the answers, he always does. Okay, so I have a *Godwink* coming, *Gingerbread Miracle*, and what's the train one again?

Jami Next Stop, Christmas.

Annie: Can we write a Western? Where are the Western Christmas movies? Well, I guess *When Calls the Heart*.

Jami Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, Jami, after we've talked to the Deck the Hallmark guys, you know what we have to do next?

Jen Just a quick outline of our Western Hallmark film?

Annie: Yes, right no, no-

Jen What is happening-

Annie: What is happening with-

Jen Speaking of GAC Family, *When Calls the Heart*-

Annie: Oh man, it is so dramatic.

Jami Stay tuned for some hot gos at the end.

Annie: There's some big hot gossip.

Jami People coming back from the dead kind of hot gos.

Annie: Big time.

Jami Soap operas come to GAC Family.

Annie: Yes, yes, I can't wait. Okay, let's call the guys and then we'll make sure you come back after that well.

[00:15:28] <Music>

Dan: Well, I understand right now if any of us get Ryan Paevey there's going to be hell to pay. Because all of us, by and large, can't stand him.

Annie: Oh, this is how y'all are starting? This is how we are starting.

Jami I need to know everything.

Jen Jami is about to strike you.

Jami No, I want to know everything. Why can't you stand him?

Annie: Yes, go, y'all, start by saying why Ryan Paevey is not your favorite of the people? I didn't even introduce you. We don't have time.

Dan: How many [Crosstalk 00:15:57] in the podcast?

Annie: Yes, it is, you have to or you can say no, you can say no if you don't want to really talk about it.

Jami I just need to know offline.

Annie: No this is not offline.

Dan: Well, I can give you off-record answers and on-record answers, if it helps. The on-record answer is typically like, we feel like Ryan is there because he is an Adonis, like he looks amazing.

Annie: Yeah, yeah.

Dan: And there's nothing wrong with that at all the guy is just chiseled. He just is like he is-

Panda: He is beautiful.

Dan: ...perfectly symmetrical.

Bran: He's like us.

Dan: Yeah, very similar.

Annie: Yeah, yeah.

Dan: And maybe we're just a little jealous, because that could easily just be us.

Annie: So you don't like Ryan because of his body? You know women don't get to say that about each other.

Dan: No, what we're saying is one episode, so, typically, I'm the guy that hates the movies and I say, I don't like all these actors who can't act, it's just nobody cares, and everyone's happy, and they just move along. And for a leading male he, typically, kind of comes in last of the regulars, in my opinion, on just acting chops.

Annie: Hot take.

Dan: And that is what it is. But Ryan knows what he does, he does it well. To me, it doesn't, it's the same, it's the same performance every single time. Even within Hallmark it's the same. Well, there's a movie that came out and Bran had some negative things to say about Ryan Paevey, and Bran is the guy that loves the movies.

Annie: Right.

Dan: And when he said things about Ryan Paevey that weren't positive that set Twitter afire.

Annie: It certainly did. It certainly did.

Dan: All of the #Paeveypack came after us, and they came after us hard.

Jen: Oh, Jami, did you know about that?

Jami: No I didn't. Which one was not a favorable in your heart?

Annie: Movie.

Dan: It was the one, Don't Go Breaking My Heart.

Bran: Don't Go Breaking My Heart.

Dan: Don't Go Breaking My Heart, the matchmaker one.

Bran: The Better Love Boot Camp.

Dan: The Better Love Boot Camp one.

Jami: Yes. Uh-huh. The like with trust falls and stuff?

Panda: Yeah, yeah.

Dan: We really liked Italia Ricci, now I can get a little bit more in detail on all of that off the record if you'd like-

Jami I would.

Annie: We'll save that for your Patreon or something. Let's do an off-record gossip Patreon. Man, hey, for starters, let me now genuinely welcome y'all to That Sounds Fun. You guys thanks so much for making time to do this.

Dan: Oh, are excited to be here, we really are.

Bran: It's a dream come true and true.

Panda: And shout out to my friend Molly, who is a huge fan of your podcast and has been asking me when are you going to-

Dan: Dude stop it, stop it.

Panda: So shout out to Molly.

Dan: No, we can't do this.

Panda: I want, Molly is a huge fun. Molly would have been mad.

Dan: To be fair, my mom knew we were going to be on this show two days ago and I don't know how she knew that. My mom who's like the chaplain to women at a Christian college texted me and said, "You're going to be on Annie Down's on Thursday." Who, how did you know that information? I don't know how-

Annie: I don't know either. Here is what, your mom keeps hacking our email.

Dan: That's what it is. That's what it is.

Jami I was going to say, "Did you invite your mom through your icall and didn't remember doing that, because that may be the answer.

Dan: I just don't know how it happened. I don't know how we got there. Where she knew we were going to be on here, but Hi mom.

Annie: And Molly. Hi to Molly. Okay, will you guys introduce yourself. So, since, we get to see you Jamie, Jen and I, that's the order we're sitting in. Annie in leopard, Jen in the middle, Jamie in the black. Will y'all introduce yourselves because our friends listening, obviously, don't get to see you. But I want them to know whose name is who and kind of tell us your role in the Deck the Hallmark world.

Bran: Yeah, I'm Bran and I love Hallmark Christmas Movies, and I wear this sweater every day. Just because I want everyone to know it.

Annie: Year out?

Bran: Well, sometimes.

Jen Wow, it's really hot in South Carolina in the summer.

Annie: Yeah. South Carolina that feels like a lot.

Bran: I have a version with the sleeves cut off.

Dan: Yeah, he's going to go Belichick.

Annie: That's a very South Carolina thing to say.

Dan: Annie you're from Marietta you get it, sleeves are

Annie: Are y'all Gamecocks kind of guys?

Dan: I went to the University of South Carolina for my undergrad. I grew up a Clemson fan my whole life. We're currently in Greenville, 45 minutes from Clemson and so I went to Carolina because I was, at that time, living in Columbia and it was just easier and quicker and cheaper to go. So kind of but I'm more of a Clemson fans really.

Annie: Okay, great.

Dan: Yeah.

Panda: No, I hate all of it.

Bran: Anytime the car like, it's the worst part about living here.

Dan: It's overwhelming. Yeah, but we all hate Georgia fans. We all hate Georgia fans, we collectively say Georgia is the worst and we all agree.

Annie: Didn't even say your book title, so "Go Dawgs Sic 'Em" Okay, sorry. Keep introducing yourself after Bran, who's next?

Panda: Okay. Hey, I'm Panda and I like Hallmark Christmas Movies, and I kind of mediate between these two guys. I'm pretty much the peacemaker. I wouldn't say I'm generic. I give hot takes from time to time.

Dan: You couldn't be less generic.

Panda: Thank you.

Dan: You have provided a very specific spice to what we do.

Panda: Oh, thank you.

Dan: Don't sell yourself short.

Panda: Thank you. You're so sweet.

Dan: Yeah, I'm Dan. I despise Hallmark Christmas Movies, in their entirety, pretty much from stem to stern. We've watched for about 500 of them and I think I've enjoyed about 10. So you know that batting average isn't great.

Annie: That math ain't great, no.

Dan: Yeah. But yeah, so I'm here, but I love these guys and we're the best of friends, and clearly it's not big enough of a pain for me to stop doing this. So I hate them but I still watch them volitionally.

Annie: Yes. Okay, so y'all tell us about the book you've written?

Bran: Yeah, absolutely.

Dan: We will.

Bran: It's called I'll Be Home for Christmas Movies. And the goal is for it to be kind of a guide for throwing a Hallmark Christmas viewing party. And so it has 116 movies with reviews and some fun snippets. And so you can pick a really good one or you can pick a really bad one, depending on how you're feeling. We've got recipes, we got cocktails. We got fun snippets from actors-

Dan: Bingo cards, drinking games, all that-

Bran: So it's it's the perfect guide to help you throw a party, but also, if you love the movies, it's great to just keep by your TVs so when the movie goes from this one to that one, you can just flip it open and see it. And then if you don't like the movies like Dan you will still get a lot of chuckles, because Dan is just mean.

Dan: I will say like on Amazon there is a review, one of our first reviews was, "This books great except for the one guy who doesn't like the movies, why is he involved?" We're like, "That's the bit." Like that's the why we do this.

Annie: You're like apparently y'all don't know us, you were just googling Hallmark Movies.

Dan: That's right. But thanks for buying the book nonetheless.

Annie: Quick question that's going to matter a lot to me and Jen and Jamie. Are we also hearties? Are y'all also hearties? Are you When Calls the Heart kind of guys?

Dan: Dear Lord!

Bran: Oh, man!

Dan: I'm glad we, at least, talked about the book. We started watching When Calls the Heart from its beginning over this in January.

Bran: In January.

Panda: In January this year.

Dan: So we are through four seasons, and I can tell you wholeheartedly I would rather watch Hallmark Movies on a loop than an episode of When Calls the Heart.

Annie: Wow.

Dan: It's tough, tough for me.

Panda: Listen, as somebody who likes pretty much everything Hallmark puts out, I started off with as much optimism as anyone has ever had. I was bright eyed bushy tailed, I was excited, and by season four I got to be honest with y'all it's kind of beat me down guys. And I've kind of lost heart, I'm kind of in a little bit of despair.

Annie: You know what they call you? They call you hearties

Dan: Hearties?

Annie: Isn't that right Jami?

Jen Oh yeah, there's a whole Facebook group Jami is a member.

Jami I joined for research, yeah, for viewing purposes. I haven't participated in-

Jen It's very entertaining.

Jami ...Screenshots there are, sorry, spoiler alert as you're going through this but Daniel Lissing's character is no longer with the show.

Dan: Jack? No. [Crosstalk 00:24:07]

Jen Here's the thing if you watch this show several years after you watch it, you're out of that. You don't get to be on the playlist. That's called beyond the ball, be better.

Dan: To be fair, before we started watching the show, the reason we started watching the show is we reviewed, they would put out a Christmas movie every year and because our thing is we review every new Christmas Movie. In 2018 we watched When Calls the Heart the greatest Christmas blessing like just completely out of context.

Annie: Yes. Yes.

Dan: And it was the first thing they had done after Jack had died. And we started that episode and in my hot take I said, "I, for one, I'm glad Jack's dead." Like I just said that.

Annie: The hearties came for you over that.

Dan: And it was a blast-

Jami You have a personal security detail at all times? Now I feel like that might be necessary.

Dan: We were on a service called Friendly TV, and people were emailing the CEO of Friendly asking them to cancel us. Because of my hot take-

Annie: Yeah you cannot play with Jack.

Jami Yeah, we are several years past and the Hearties are just a group of people talking about the upset very passionate, and how they still want jack back.

Dan: The joke is on them because Daniel Lissing is a dear friend of our show. He's been on like five times and he's the best dude and we love him, and we make those jokes with him and he thinks they're hilarious. So joke is on them.

Bran: For, I will just say this, for as uplifting as Hallmark is The Hearties-

Dan: Oh my gosh.

Bran: ...like there's a segment of The Hearties that is the complete opposite and they're just very vicious. And when it came down to the most recent season with who's going to choose this and the other. When they finally chose like they were just mean to poor Chris McNally, the guy who got picked, they're just attacking the poor guy. And, for the life of me, I just don't get it, I don't get.

Jami I don't either.

[**Bran:** Especially like with that show.

Jami Especially they're fictional humans. It's not like this is a video of the people that were concerned about. Like poor Erin, she's an actress, and people act like she has made these personal choices herself and someone didn't write them for her.

[00:26:19] <Music>

Annie: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation real quick share about another one of our incredible partners, Thrive Market. Thrive Market is an online membership-based market on a mission to make healthy living easy and affordable for everyone and let me tell you it is a club you want to be in.

Thrive carries all your favorite clean brands that don't clean out your wallet. You can shop everything from ethically-sourced pantry essentials, to sustainable meat and seafood, to non-toxic cleaning and beauty products. They have awesome snacks like the chomps snack sticks, and the wisps cheddar crisps those are hard to say but delicious to eat. But I also really love the Thrive brand for pantry staples like avocado oil, and salt, and other things that I use really regularly. Man, their Himalayan pink sea salt is so good, and I consistently save on my groceries with thrive.

They have monthly or annual memberships and I cannot overstate how true this is high-quality standards are standard and Thrive Market. They carefully vet each and every item so you can trust that if it's there, it's the best. Thrive Market allows you to be healthy in your own way and it offers you the flexibility to shop what you want to eat and how you want to live. Are you interested in shopping low

sugar or keto or gluten free or zero waste? With as many BIPOC-Owned brands as possible, Thrive allows you to filter by 90 plus values and lifestyles to find what works for you.

These filters are such a time saver for me and rather than browsing through labels at a grocery store to buy the way I want to, Thrive filters are doing all that work for me. With Thrive Market your membership means more for families in need and our planet.

When you join they donate a membership to a family in need to the tune of donating 4.5 million dollars in healthy groceries and counting. Thrive does carbon neutral shipping and is on a mission to be the first climate positive grocer, I love that. Can your grocery store do that?

Now it can when you go to thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun. Join today to get 30% off your first order and a free gift. That's thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun to get 30% off your first order and a free gift. [Thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun](https://thrivemarket.com/thatsoundsfun). And now back to our conversation about Hallmark Christmas Movies.

[00:28:32] <Music>

Jordan: What's going on y'all, I'm Jordan rice.

Jessica: And I'm Jessica rice.

Jordan: And we started Renaissance Church in Harlem, New York and my favorite Christmas song is "Oh Holy Night" by Mariah Carey on a Mariah Carey Christmas.

Jessica: And my favorite Christmas song is "Oh Holy Night" as well. It's been my favorite before it was Jordan's favorite. And it's my favorite because I mean really can anyone not cry when you hear "Fall on your knees?" I mean come on!

Jordan: It's the best.

Jessica: It's the best.

John: Hey, this is Jon Tyson. I'm the author of *The Intention Father* and my favorite Christmas song is "Oh Holy Night". And I love that line that says, "The soul felt it's worth." That's what Christmas does for us and we're so grateful for God's Grace.

[00:29:24] <Music>

Annie: Okay, so the thing we're going to do that's going to lead to a good conversation, I hope, is let's do a little build drawn Hallmark Movie draft. Are y'all ready?

Panda: Yes.

Panda: Let's do it.

Annie: Okay.

Bran: I'm so stressed out.

Annie: I know good, I hope so. The way this is going to work and our friends listening there is actually available on my Instagram, in the Insta Stories, is your ability to play along with us. But we're going to draft just like a real draft. So for the first section we are going to build our own movies. We have locations, actor, actress, profession, and here's a quick note, gentlemen, when it comes to the profession, you can apply it to either your actor or actress. Okay?

Bran: Oh, okay.

Panda: Oh, wow.

Annie: You are welcome. And then there's some sort of holiday connection and then the big problem, what's going sideways? And then the trope, how did these people fall in love? So we're going to start with the first section, the location, and here's who gets to go first, first pick on location is Brandon. Brandon what location do you want to go?

Dan: Oh, my god!

Bran: God is on my side.

Annie: He is. I've been meaning to tell you.

Bran: Oh, my gosh! Okay, so, there's Alaska wilderness, big city, the beach, cruise ship, small town, and dude ranch.

Annie: Yeah. Where's your movie?

Dan: I got one that I really want, please don't take it.

Bran: Listen, I am a sucker for the small town.

Annie: Okay.

Bran: I'm not over the small town. I love the small town. I want-

Dan: Were you born in a small town?

Bran: I was born in a small town and, in fact, I love small town Christmas so much that a couple years ago for my anniversary, I googled best like, I wanted to go to Colorado with my wife and so I googled "Best Christmas towns in Colorado?" And we shaped our whole anniversary trip bouncing around some Christmas towns in Colorado. I love small town so I'm going to go with the small town.

Panda: Okay.

Annie: You're very on-brand as a person.

Bran: Thank you.

Annie: Okay, Jami, what's your location for your film?

Jami Well, as a Northwest girl, I'm going to go with Alaska wilderness.

Annie: Okay, Jami. So for the rest of us playing we have to mark these off as we're losing opportunities to do them. Panda, where would you like your location of your movie to be?

Dan: Unbelievable, man.

Panda: Okay, I don't want to miss this-

Bran: You're going to be stuck on the beach Dan. Let's got to the beach, let's go to the beach.

Panda: Do you know what guys I'm going to, I'm really torn on this, this is tough. I'm going to go big city.

Annie: Oh, big city?

Dan: That's the one I wanted.

Panda: I'm going big city.

Dan: Big city is the one I wanted.

Panda: I got big city here. I think we can do something fun with it, right.

Annie: Okay. Dan you are next, buddy.

Dan: And that's the one I wanted, was big city.

Annie: Good.

Dan: It's unbelievable. So I've got beach, cruise ship, or dude ranch? Get out of here!

Annie: Yeah, yeah.

Dan: Geez! Too many Christmas. Let's see. I've never seen a good cruise ship movie on Hallmark.

Jami I think there's only one.

Annie: Therefore, you want it or you don't want it?

Dan: Love at sea? Dude ranch sounds miserable. Let go out of the box here and let's go with the beach.

Annie: Okay.

Dan: Let's go with the beach.

Annie: Dancing in the beach.

Dan: I live in South Carolina we got great beaches, I feel like we can make it work. Let's go with the beach.

Jen Play Nicholas Sparks of you.

Annie: Yes. I pull my own name next and I'm going to go dude ranch. So Jen?

Jen I'm going crazy. I'm going to say my cruise ship is like in the Mediterranean not the Caribbean.

Annie: Oh, *Below Deck Med*, that's what you're doing, *Below Deck Med*. Okay, next section so we know where our movies are happening. Now we get to know the main actor again with the hot take on Ryan Paevey from you guys, I'm fascinated. Brandon you are first.

Dan: Again? How does this work?

Annie: I have a bowl with everybody's name on it.

Bran: I had one heck of a devotional this morning and so-

Annie: Right.

Dan: Stop it. Stop it.

Bran: I'm going with my boy Tyler Hines. Tyler Hines is hot, hot, hot. I'm picking Tyler Hines. Tyler Hines in the small town, I guess-

Annie: That's a good start.

Jami: That's a good start.

Dan: Yeah, it is.

Annie: Panda, you are next.

Panda: Oh good. This is Victor Webster joint now-

Annie: Wow, Panda. I'm sorry, y'all. I was on the Hallmark Family the same day as Victor Webster and Jen practically wanted me to live stream the entire experience.

Panda: He is the best.

Dan: Dude, he has been in our show, he is unbelievable. He has stories for days, just unbelievable guy.

Annie: Okay, Dan, you next. Gentlemen first this round?

Dan: Okay so, because I'm on the beach, you got to go with the King Don himself Trevor Don. Trevor Don, I mean, on the beach, it just makes sense. The guy was born to play a character that's surfing with his shirt off, like that's what he's born to do.

Annie: Yeah, agreed.

Panda: Absolutely.

Annie: I feel like that's the most he was born for.

Dan: No, that's accurate.

Annie: That's my hot take.

Dan: He and Paevey went to the same school, that's for sure.

Annie: Jami?

Jami Oh, Ryan Paevey, always.

Annie: Jami is Ryan Paevey star.

Dan: Yeah.

Annie: So that is her. Okay, next is me. Well, listen, here's what y'all need to know about me-

Jen Why is this the same order as the last time?

Annie: It was honest. Sorry, Jen, you pick the last again, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I am a die-hard Brendan Penny gal. Die-hard Brendan Penny gal.

Bran: Really?

Jen We have our alliances.

Annie: Brendan Penny on a dude ranch? Bye, that's the whole show. I can walk right now and I'm fine.

Dan: I've never met a diehard Brendan Penny fan.

Bran: Me neither.

Annie: There's not a Facebook group for us, but I'm in it.

Panda: Pen pals.

Annie: Yeah, oh my gosh! I got to keep it right because he's married but I like that guy. I like that.

Dan: Fair enough.

Annie: Jen, sorry, you're last again.

Jen I've got Carlos PenaVega I feel like he works well in a cruise ship.

Annie: Yeah.

Jen Wasn't he on a cruise ship movie?

Dan: He's been on a cruise ship movie.

Jen That's why he works for the cruise ship.

Jami You are building an actual movie that has already happened.

Bran: Okay, you are building a movie that's already happened, you got to be honest.

Dan: The one that you build will be better than that one.

Annie: Okay, so we know the actor we know the location and next we have the actresses. Nicki DeLoach Candace Cameron Bure, Tamera Mowry-Housley, Merritt Patterson, Lacey Chabert, Danica McKellar, and I get to pick first. And I'm going to go and Nikki DeLoach. I'm going to put Nikki and Brendan together. I know, sorry, she and Brendan were meant to be. Okay, next draw is Panda.

Panda: Oh, good. Oh, man, this is difficult.

Dan: If either, so help me if I get stuck with CCB. So help me.

Panda: You know what, I've got play to the strings here. I'm going with Danica McKellar.

Annie: Oh, wow, interesting.

Dan: So that's a Danica/Victor joint, haven't they done a movie together?

Bran: Yeah, Grand Valley.

Panda: Yeah.

Dan: No, Christmas at Grand Valley is Brennan Elliot not Victor Webster.

Jami Did you also know that we are in a movie with Danica McKellar? [**Crosstalk 00:36:06**]

Annie: Oh, we did y'all know we are in a movie with Danica McKellar.

Dan: No, they did a mystery. It's a mystery.

Bran: The Mystery.

Dan: The did a mystery together.

Panda: Yep. This is what I want. It's all coming together.

Jen Santa is missing, how will we find him?

Annie:Hold on, we don't know yet.

Jen Oh, okay.

Annie:Jami, you do get next pick.

Jami I'm going to go with Merritt Patterson.

Annie:Okay, good answer. Next up, Dan, who would you like to be your actress?

Dan: Oh, give me a Lacey Chabert and Trevor Donovan. Yeah give me Lacey.

Annie:Okay, oh I like that.

Bran: That's a good combo.

Dan: Yeah, Lacey and Trevor Donovan at the beach.

Annie:She is going to be annoyed by him, we all know this. I need to keep my opinions to myself. Jen?

Jen I'll go with Candace.

Annie:Okay, good choice. Candace and Carlos on a cruise ship?

Jen On the seas.

Annie:Wow.

Panda: That's a movie.

Annie:That is the film. This is the film that is coming together.

Dan: If you can convince Candace to do that movie [**Crosstalk 00:37:03**] president of the United States.

Annie: You would have to own the cruise ship. The only way is if she actually owns a cruise ship.

Dan: Is it like the DC Talk cruise ship?

Jen McKellar, McKellar Cruise Ships

Annie: McKellar Cruise. Okay, Brandon you get last pick. Who have you got?

Bran: I going to Tamera, *Sister Sister*, let's do this thing. I like that pick. I like Tamera.

Panda: No, that's a good combo.

Dan: And Tamera and Tyler would be fun together.

Bran: They would be fun.

Annie: Yeah, that's a good, I appreciate that. Okay, now the profession. You can fill this profession in for either your actor or your actress, but you do need to tell us who's getting this profession. And for our friends listening why don't we, when we do our profession, let's also kind of go back and say "Okay, I'm the big city. Here's my person." Let's do a little recap. So first up, Brandon, you get first dibs this time.

Bran: Oh my gosh. Okay, so there's chef, author, tree farmer, B&B owner, accountant, and firefighter.

Annie: Yes.

Bran: I'm going to throw a curveball here.

Annie: Oh, I'm interested.

Bran: And Tamera is going to be a firefighter. So Tamera is a firefighter who is-

Jami In a small town.

Bran: ...in a small town with Tyler Hines. I'm not sure how they've connected yet.

Annie: Oh, gosh. You know what, my DVR just got pushed.

Bran: Right? That's a good movie.

Panda: Yeah, that's great.

Annie: I just hit the red button over that. Jami? What profession would you like Jami?

Jami Well, just to stay on theme. I'm going to go with a tree farmer and I'm going to be Ryan Paevey. I'm in the Alaskan Wilderness.

Dan: I mean, come on.

Jen He did something, was it fruit, like apples or something in some movie?

Jami Oh, yeah. He was.

Dan: He was up on the ranch with Krakow in Montana, what was that movie?

Jami Yes and he comes to buy it and she owns the ranch.

Annie: Yeah,

Jami Her name is Sam. So we don't know if he's a guy or a girl.

Bran: If he is not chopping the wood what are we doing?

Annie: Yeah, what are we even doing here? Why would we pass that up?

Jami So I'm in the Alaska wilderness with Ryan Paevey and Merritt Patterson, and Ryan is a tree farmer and who knows what's going to happen.

Annie: I like this movie. Panda It's your turn.

Dan: I got to be honest with you, if you're going to cast Paevey that is the way to go.

Annie: That's the way to go. Yeah, she is doing this right.

Annie: Panda, you are up.

Panda: Oh, man. Okay, I'm going with the accountant. Big City accountant.

Annie: Interesting. Oh, big city accountants, of course.

Panda: Yeah. And I'm going to have Danica be the accountant-

Dan: That checks out, she is a natural.

Jen That checks out.

Panda: Yeah, she is a natural

Annie: Yeah. That checks out.

Jami She's like that. She'd like that.

Panda: Graced with strength. Okay, so what I have is big city and then I have Victor Webster, Danica McKellar. She is the accountant. This movie is coming together then-

Annie: This is a bright movie you're creating. Victor Webster in a three-piece suit is the business. That's good move.

Dan: This sounds almost like a prestige drama.

Annie: Yeah.

Dan: For the Oscars.

Panda: It's going to be, it might happen.

Dan: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. I'm next. And I'm going to go B&B owner of the dude ranch. I'm going to go B&B owner of the dude ranch and it is Nikki. Nikki owns the dude ranch, she's the owner.

Dan: Wow, that makes sense.

Annie: With Brendan. But we'll see where Brendan is, I don't know yet. Okay, next draw, Jen?

Jen Okay-

Annie: I'm sorry Jen.

Jen I am going to go with Chef and Carlos is going to be the chef on the cruise ship.

Annie: Oh, right. Carlos is the chef.

Jen And Candace is also one.

Annie: And Candace is also one. Okay, Dan, you're next.

Dan: Okay, so I'm set at the beach, which is exciting. There's no way that Trevor Donovan is an author of anything so Lacey Chabert is the author. She is going to the beach because she's got writer's block.

Bran: She's got writers block.

Annie: Oh, you don't know yet. You don't know why she goes there.

Jami You don't know what her big problem is?

Dan: We'll figure it out.

Annie: You better hope someone else doesn't take writer's block for your problem.

Dan: Only Hallmark can do this.

Annie: Okay, the next thing is the holiday connection. So first, Dan, you get first pick of what's the holiday connection. We have Santa, reindeer, Christmas trees, gingerbread, a nativity scene or Hanukkah.

Dan: Good gracious. Man. All right.

Bran: It's tough on the beach pal.

Dan: It's tough on the beach. But you know what I'm going to do on the beach? I'm just going to go ahead and put Santa out there.

Annie: Are you? Okay,

Dan: I'm going to put Santa out there. So it's a surfing Santa and it's Trevor, he's a surfing Santa. What he does is he dresses up as Santa and he goes to all the islands nearby.

Annie: Yeah.

Dan: With the people that aren't used to getting visits from Santa and he takes some presents on his boat, and he dresses up as Santa to do it. He's the surfing Santa.

Jami He is into movies so much, that's the most detail story I have ever heard.

Dan: That's right. I've watched thousands of these movies. I'm living in that world right now. Surfing Santa.

Annie: Well done. Okay, Panda, you are next.

Panda: Okay. Oh, you know I just got to go gingerbread.

Bran: I had a whole world in my mind where Tyler was a baker.

Annie: He is not.

Jami: I have never seen an upset over gingerbread in my whole life.

Panda: I see it coming together.

Annie: Yeah.

Panda: Oh, this is going to be good. They're putting together a whole gingerbread village.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Panda: And then-

Annie: In the big city, Panda?

Panda: They will make it happen.

Dan: The thing about your movie is you've made all of the sensible choices and your movie sounds boring. You've made all the choices-

Annie: You were sensible with the gingerbread.

Panda: Gingerbread is never boring.

Dan: You made all the sensible choices.

Jami: What if it's life-sized gingerbread?

Dan: That's the thing and the movie sounds like I don't want to be part of it.

Panda: I will say that it seems like there would be a lot of talking in this movie.

Annie: Yeah, there is a lot of talking. If it's an accountant that's focused on gingerbread? Okay, Jen, you get next pick.

Jen Okay, I'm going to change the location of my cruise ship and go with the reindeer, and we're going to be in the Arctic or Alaska.

Annie: Oh, okay.

Dan: Is it like an aircraft carrier where a reindeer can kind of land on the ship?

Annie: Good answer. Okay, I respect. Okay, Jami.

Dan: Santa's refueling posts.

Annie: Jami, we've got Christmas trees, nativity scene or Hanukkah left for your Alaska wilderness movie.

Jami Well, the safe and direct answer would be Christmas tree since he's a tree farmer in the Alaska wilderness. But I'm going with the nativity scene.

Annie: Wow.

Dan: Wow, what in the world just happened?

Annie: I can't imagine. Okay, Brandon you get next pick Hanukkah or Christmas trees?

Dan: I can't believe you gave him Christmas trees?

Annie: I can't either, honestly.

Dan: I was waiting for him to have to choose between nativity scene and Hanukkah. It was just a classic Sophie's Choice, no right to answer and you didn't make him do it. That's on you.

Bran: Here's what is going to happen. I am picking Christmas trees. Tyler is decorating a Christmas tree and unfortunately lights on fire and that's how they meet.

Annie: Wow.

Panda: That is nice.

Annie: Lucky for me, I have a dude ranch focused on Hanukkah. So, here we go-

Dan: Hanukkah, yes you do.

Annie:...Nikki and Brandon and I are going hard on that Hanukkah. Okay, so now we've got a big problem every Hallmark movie has a big problem. We're going to list out the big problems that we get to draft. First one running out of money that happens a lot. Someone has died that happens a lot. The business is closing.

Bran: Oh, wow.

Annie: This next one is Jen's contribution that made us laugh so hard at dinner last night, I could barely breathe. The city's tradition is in danger. The city's tradition is in danger.

Dan: The block party.

Annie: Yeah, the block party, the lighting of the tree, the parade, something is endangered.

Jami It happens a lot. It's a major plot.

Jen It is.

Annie: The other two are creative block of some kind and then a time travel or different eras situation. So first pick is Jami.

Jami Oh.

Annie: What's your problem there with your nativity scene-

Jen: Up in Alaska. City tradition is in danger.

Annie: Oh, what is the city tradition, Jami?

Jami The nativity scene is part of town.

Dan: Are you telling me they're trying to steal Christmas?

Jami There's a nativity scene in danger? They don't have a nativity, it's been broken. And so Ryan Paevey is a tree farmer who is going to have to make one for them.

Annie: Wow. Wow.

Dan: Someone over there is trying to take Jesus out of Christmas.

Annie: That's right. That's right. I think it means taking the Christ out of Christmas.

Dan: The supporting actor there is Kirk Cameron, from what I understand.

Annie: Okay, Jen, you get to pick the next problem.

Jen On a cruise ship?

Annie: Yeah, you got a cruise ships to choose.

Jen I think I'm going to have to go with creative block. I think Candace has the creative block.

Annie: Oh, okay.

Jen She's gone on a cruise, it brings her back to like-

Annie: Wow, you've really messed up Dan's life, but luckily, Dan, you've got next pick. So you get out of running out of money, someone has died.

Dan: You know this is time travel. You know this is time travel. Interesting movie.

Annie: Time travel?

Dan: Time travel is my favorite, favorite one of these plotlines, because we just embrace the stupid when we do time travel and it's wonderful. Lacey is an author-

Annie: Author at the beach?

Dan: Yeah, time travel is amazing, I want to be clear, it's my favorite trope. But in Hallmark they don't have to make it make sense or even try and it's wonderful. So what happens is, is she thinks she's driving, maybe, for a creative block. What happens is she enters some sort of portal that takes her back in time, to like the '50s, and that's where Trevor Donovan is. He's like a '50s-

Annie: He is like a beach blanket bingo kind of a guy?

Dan: Yeah. Maybe during kind of beach boys' era.

Annie: Yes.

Dan: '60s-ish, right.

Annie: This is the only Trevor I've ever been interested in.

Dan: That's right. And that's why he's called surfing Santa like surfing Safari like beach boys.
[Crosstalk 00:46:45]

Jami Annie-

Dan: This movie that you stuck me with is now your favorite movie, you're welcome. Let's go surfing-

Annie: Dan, you got straight take out of me because I did not see that coming. I could show you the water on the floor. You got a straight take out of me that's so good. Okay, Brandon, next pick. What's your problem?

Bran: Okay, so there's running out of money, someone has died, and business is closing. Well, I got to save someone who has died for the Nikki DeLoach movie, because it's every one of her movies. The only thing Nikki does is is my grandma left me this will or my aunt left me this bakery. Like you know what everyone-

Dan: Oh, she's our favorite.

Jami The horse one didn't. The horse one with her and her ex-husband trying to find each other.

Annie: But someone had died to get-

Dan: No, no, no someone died that there was a component of that.

Bran: Someone died.

Jami Is why she came home.

Panda: Someone is always dead.

Jami Because their dad was going to give out their horse.

Panda: But the one that's coming out this weekend, someone dies.

Dan: Cranberry Christmas, Madly Sweetly-

Annie: I love Cranberry Christmas. Okay, so what are you going to pick, Bran?

Bran: I'm going to go with running out of money. The fire department is running out of money.

Dan: The fire department is like government funded.

Bran: Not this one fire. Not in this small town is all volunteer based and they're running out of money.

Dan: We have to save the tree lighting and we can't fund the fire department.

Jami Chesapeake Shores.

Annie: Yeah, in Chesapeake Shores, Brendan Penny is a fireman and they just did a tree fundraiser so I've seen it. I've seen it.

Bran: There you go.

Panda: You have exactly-

Annie: Next poll is me so I am going to go with I'm sorry to tell you I'm going to go with businesses closing because the Hanukkah dude ranch is at risk. That's the plot line.

Dan: In this economy how you run a Hanukkah dude ranch? [Crosstalk 00:48:40]. I just feel like-

Panda: It is brutal.

Dan: So that means Panda's thrilling movie-

Bran: Someone has died.

Annie: Panda, someone died in your big city.

Jen Building gingerbread house is a deathly act.

Dan: Put that Debbie Downer or Rachel-

Panda: This is the saddest movie I've ever heard of-

Jami It's definitely going to be on the Mystery not on the Hallmark Channel.

Annie: The last thing that is going to make our movies complete is what is the trope? What is the relationship that happens between the two people? So here are the options; it's best friends who fall in love. It's exes who reconnect. It's childhood friends to love. Co-workers to love. Missed connections to love. Think a very merry mix up, and enemies, competitors to love. So first person, Brandon, finish out your movie what would you like-

Bran: You got to choose first like three times? [Crosstalk 00:49:34]

Annie: Brandon the bowl says you are first.

Bran: So I do want to walk everyone through this?

Annie: Yeah. Talk us through your movie.

Bran: We have Tamera who is a firefighter. Whose fire department is in danger because they're running out of money. She gets a call one day that there's been a Christmas tree that's been caught on fire.

Annie: Wow.

Bran: She shows up and that tree belongs to Tyler Heines. And when they meet, they realize that they were childhood friends. That they've somehow missed each other. They're childhood friends and they end up falling in love, because he joins her and doing some fundraiser, some Christmas-themed fundraisers to save the fire department.

Jami As if they-

Bran: So we call that movie Red Hot Christmas.

Annie: Red Hot Christmas, Brandon I can't. That's perfect. Okay, Panda your turn.

Panda: Okay, I'm going to do enemies and competitors to love and so here is what I've got. It's a big city. We've got Victor Webster as the detective, I'm going to have him as a detective in this one. I'm going to have Danica McKellar, she's the accountant and she is helping with this gingerbread thing. Somebody dies with the gingerbread falling on top of them, was it murder?

Annie: Oh, was it murder?

Panda: They're competing with one another. He's a hardened detective and she's the accountant and we'll call it Better Gingerbread Than Dead.

Dan: Nothing about that screams Christmas but I want to watch it now.

Bran: You've sold me on it.

Dan: You've sold me on.

Annie: Better Gingerbread Than Dead. I love that Panda. Okay, Jen, finish out your movie.

Jen Okay, we are on a cruise ship where Carlos is the chef, and Candice has gone on the cruise because she's experiencing creative block and they're best friends that's why she's chosen his cruise ship.

Annie: Oh got it, okay.

Jen And they end up falling in love over his delicious food that he's cooking.

Annie: And what's your movie called?

Jen Oh gosh. Ship It.

Dan: Ship It.

Jami It actually works.

Annie: Okay great.

Panda: Try Ship It.

Bran: Ship Shape.

Annie: Oh, you like Ship Shape better or Ship It?

Jen I like Ship It.

Annie: Okay, Ship It.

[00:52:04] <Music>

Annie: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about another one of our incredible partners, Green Chef. I know we're all doing our best to fit into things that matter to us most; work, rest, spiritual rhythms, exercise, time with our people. Sometimes it's easy for balanced eating to fall down the priority list a little bit and that's why I love Green Chef so much.

Green Chef is a USDA certified organic company, with meal plans that include keto, paleo, plant-powered, and options for those of us who simply want a dinner menu that's a little more balanced.

Green Chef is the most sustainable meal kit offsetting 100% of their plastic packaging and every box in 100% of their carbon footprint and emissions. And their pre-portioned ingredients mean you'll actually reduce your food waste by at least 25% compared to grocery shopping. You can enjoy your greens while being green.

Green Chef has options for every lifestyle, including keto and paleo, vegan, vegetarian, fast and fit, Mediterranean, and gluten free and they make cooking easy so you can spend less time stressing and more time enjoying delicious home-cooked meals.

Green Chef offers 35 nutritious and flavorful options to choose from every week. Featuring premium clean ingredients that are seasonally sourced for peak freshness.

Green Chef's wide array of easy-to-follow recipes means that there's something new to discover each week, so you never get bored. I am for that. No getting stuck in the same old dinners week after week. That Cuban chicken with chimichurri, y'all it cannot be beat so much flavor, is so easy to make and the leftovers were just as good as the first time around.

So go to greenchef.com/thatsoundsfun10 and use the code THATSOUNDSFUN10, like THATSOUNDSFUN10 to get 10 free meals including free shipping. Again, that's greenchef.com/thatsoundsfun10 and the code to get 10 free meals is THATSOUNDSFUN10. Green Chef, the number one meal kit for eating well.

Another one of our incredible partners is, Flamingo. It's a great thing about the time in which we live that there are so many options for pretty much everything including those hair removal needs. There's waxing and laser hair removal, more expensive and more involved spa options and then there's good old shaving.

I don't know about you but for me when there are too many options, and pricing, and pain levels, the decision gets a little overwhelming Thank goodness for Flamingo and for how their convenient subscription options simplify my life.

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being less than \$2 a cartridge. I like The sound that. And you can adjust your subscription as you need to or cancel anytime with no hassle.

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Take the quiz at shopflamingo.com/annie to discover your custom hair removal routine and save an extra 10% off your first order when you subscribe using the code ANNIE at checkout. That's shopflamingo.com/annie and the promo code is ANNIE. And now back to finish up our conversation with Jen and Jami, Dan, Bran, and Panda our 2021 Hallmark Hall of Fame.

[00:55:42] <Music>

Mike: Hey guys, this is comedian Mike Goodwin and you can find me at Dry Bar Comedy. My special is called WhatchaNotGoneDo is not laugh at these jokes. And my favorite Christmas song is "Silent Night" by The Temptation. That song just makes my heart leap.

Jeff: Hey, my name is Jeff Druker and my favorite Christmas song is "Music Box Blues" by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

[00:56:11] <Music>

Annie: Okay, I get to go next, Annie.

Dan: Good Lord.

Annie: And these are going to be exes who are reconnecting Brendan and... So the dude ranch is in danger and it's going to close, and actually Brendan is coming because he's thinking about buying it. He's thinking about buying it.

Dan: Oh, okay.

Annie: And they end up falling in love, and my movie is called Dreidel, Dreidel Dude Ranch.

Panda: Dreidel, Dreidel Dude Ranch.

Bran: Yes, sir.

Panda: That is old.

Annie: I thought you'd be proud of that. Okay, next up, Dan. So you get to pick co-workers or missed connections.

Dan: Missed connections to love, for sure, missed connections to love.

Annie: Okay, keep going. You already named it or does this change the name?

Dan: Yeah, Surfing Santa for sure. And imagine, Lacey is growing up and is friends with with another girl in high school or whatever. And a couple times from the rival high school she meets this guy and they never get each other's name and there's these flirtatious moments. Sparks are here and then it happens a few years later, and then she never sees him again.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Dan: And she-

Bran: Cut to modern day.

Dan: ...cut to modern day. She's working on her latest, she's a historian, Lacey Chabert is a historian.

Annie: That feels right.

Dan: She is working on her latest history book about the Cold War. Sure, why not? And she's driving down to what she thinks is the beach, let's say you know a beach-

Annie: What she thinks is a beach.

Dan: ...she thinks it's modern day beach and she pulls off at a convenience store. And in the convenience store is a convenience store worker who, "Is that William Shatner?" Yeah. It's William Shatner.

Annie: Special guest star.

Dan: And Shatner starts popping off some very weird advice about time and stuff. And when she walks out and gets back in her car, when she walks back outside from the convenience store, her car is now like a '62 Thunderbird.

Bran: And the convenience store is a soda shop.

Dan: The convenience store is a soda shop.

Annie: It's a soda shop.

Dan: That's right. And she shows up and she meets none other than Trevor Donovan, who is the guy who her entire life she's had these moments with and they've never really worked out. And what's he doing back there as an adult? So he doesn't remember her. He thinks he's from the era. He's doing this thing, she's sure that she saw him, and she's met him and he doesn't know her.

Panda: This is amazing.

Dan: So are they going to find out why this happened? Are they going to find out if they love each other? Are they just going to find Christmas on the beach?

Annie: Or are they just going to find Christmas. Wow. Wow.

Dan: Surfing Santa.

Annie: Okay.

Dan: Surfing Santa.

Annie: That is more than I expected and I support it. Okay, Jami that means you have to finish up with co-workers who are in love. Tell us about your movie.

Jami So we are set in the Alaska wilderness. Ryan Paevey is a tree farmer and Merritt Patterson is his co-worker. The town square has a Nativity scene that has been destroyed.

Annie: What?

Jami Yeah. We don't know who but this isn't a mystery movie, so we don't spend much time figuring that out. But Merritt Patterson volunteers to build the new nativity scene with the trees from the farm that she works at.

Annie: Okay.

Jami Her grumbly co-worker, Ryan Paevey, is not wanting to be a part of that.

Annie: We love grumbly co-worker.

Jami Yeah, but he does have an honest heart. So together they work together to build this nativity scene.

Jen An honest heart.

Jami And they fall in love and it is called One Winter Wilderness.

Dan: I love it

Annie:One Winter Wilderness. Wow.

Bran: That's good.

Annie:That's good.

Dan: Did none of us put Christmas in the title of the movie?

Annie:Red Hot Christmas is Brandon's.

Dan: Red Hot Christmas.

Annie:So we do have Christmas in one title.

Dan: In one of the six.

Annie:Yes, yes, yes.

Jami I'm also going to get real wild and request that my lead characters do not wear red and green on the cover of the movie.

Jen Is that allowed?

Jami I don't know. I don't know.

Annie:I, for sure, I'm wearing red and green.

Dan: If an executive from Hallmark isn't listening to this, they have missed out. These are six gelled dynamite ideas.

Annie:I would watch, I have to get six out of six on this, I'd watch all six one time.

Dan: Yeah, I think so, sure.

Annie: Okay, we did it y'all-

Dan: Considering some of the movies that we watch.

Bran: These sound bold.

Dan: These sound amazing.

Annie: Okay, my last question for y'all, for starters, that was incredibly fun. Thank you for doing that with us. I cannot wait to see all of our friends listening to play along. Will you post the play card on the day this comes out?

Dan: Oh, yeah, for sure.

Annie: That'd be so fun between our audiences to play. Okay, so you guys will post the game card. We'll post our game card and show all these that was excellent. My last question for you all for our friends who are new to Hallmark that are sticking around because they like hearing us talk but haven't watched any movies yet, Jen and Jamie already gave their two got to watch 2021 movies. So Why don't y'all give those again? And then will y'all tell us if there's one movie that each of you think people should watch this year, so far, what is it? so Jen and Jami go say yours again for them.

Jen: I said gingerbread miracle of the movies that have come out so far. Which to be honest, I haven't been totally thrilled but I liked that one.

Jami: Mine was *Next Stop, Christmas* because it is back to the future in the Hallmark Forum, which I was here for.

Annie: Yeah. So what about you, gents?

Dan: Except Christopher Lloyd and Leah Thompson don't ever get a scene together and I couldn't believe it, in the movie.

Annie: Wait, you didn't tell us that Jamie, they're never even together?

Jami: Well, no, because Lea Thompson plays her mom and then Christopher Lloyd plays the train conductor. So there's never really-

Dan: Christopher Lloyd was amazing.

Jami: He's not on the scene with anybody other than the lead girlfriend.

Annie: Okay. Interesting. Okay, gents, what about y'all? What movies should we... what's the one you each have watched that we should watch?

Bran: I'm trying to think of how to answer this because I could pick my favorite or I could pick the one that I think will bring people the most Christmas joy.

Annie: The most palatable one?

Jami Yeah. We need to know what you've watched.

Bran: Well, my favorite, as of right now, as of this recording is *One December Night*. Which is a little bit of a sadder one but the performances are so good, the music in the movie is really good. There's just some knockout performances and so that's my favorite right now. But it's just like a little bit on the sadder side. So it might not be for everybody, if you're looking for like an upbeat Saturday night, Christmas feels while making cookies, that's probably not the one.

Annie: Sure.

Bran: But if you know if you're just by yourself on a random Wednesday, that's I want to-

Annie: Okay, good answer. I respect that.

Panda: My favorite one so far is *One December Night* as well. But I'll go with my second one since you did that. *Mrs. Miracle* is my second favorite one, I loved that movie so much.

Jen That was good.

Annie: Why? Will you tell us a little bit what made you love it?

Panda: So a couple of things, I think that the performance is really earnest. They did a really good job of balancing some really heavy topics in there with a lot of levity and they just absolutely saturate it with Christmas. There's a little bit of a supernatural element to it, that's really fun. And man, I just had a lot fun. I was smiling the whole time. It just had so many fun moments in this movie and then at the very end it got me I cried. And so it just it was happy tears, it was great. It was great.

Bran: Bawling while watching that movie.

Dan: I was going to say *Mrs. Miracle*, I can do another one, but I will say about *Mrs. Miracle*. I typically hate the angel in disguise trope like the *Touched by an Angel*.

Annie: Yeah, certainly.

Dan: I'm here helping wink, wink it's one of my least favorite things in the world. This movie, I'm a foster parent and an adoptive parent through DSS, and this movie deals in that subject matter, and typically homework doesn't do a great job there this movie does a great job with it. It is got plenty of eye rolls but I also was very emotional watching this movie which is not the case. I've never cried in a Hallmark movie ever, this one did bring a tear to my eye. But it's a positive it's all rise Steve Lund is great in the movie. Carolyn Ray, who plays Mrs. Miracle is great in the movie. That was really good. Next Stop, Christmas for bonkers time travel, I enjoyed. Yeah, I would say that Mrs. Miracle probably would be my number one.

Bran: How about Crashing?

Dan: Crashing Through the Snow which came out in July it is a really solid movie. It's got our girl Brooke Nevin in it she does a wonderful job. And it's a movie that I can't believe they aired in July, because qualitatively it's got all the Hallmark-

Annie: It's high up there.

Jami It feels as if it's the only one complete that they could put out, you know what I mean? It felt like it was a timing thing.

Annie: No, I'll tell you I know exactly what happened, is last Christmas it fell on the floor and got swept under something, the whole movie did. And then they were like, "Oh my gosh we have that one more. We got to put this out before Christmas-"

Jami You guys have all picked Hallmark Movies and Mysteries which are the more feelings one.

Annie: Wow.

Jami Our guests are a little sensitive.

Dan: Yeah. I guess, we really are in touch with our feelings. I will say this, this is not technically the answer, but I bang the drum for this movie all the time, because of the Hallmark Movies and the movies in that trope family. There's one on Lifetime that stars Andrew Walker and Bethany Joy Lenz, who I think both do a really great job and it's called Snowed Inn Christmas, I-N-N-

Jami I think I have seen that.

Dan: ...it deals with Christmas magic, and Santa, and all that stuff. But if you're going to make this type of movie, I think that that movie knocks it out of the park more than anything I've ever seen on the Hallmark.

Annie: Wow, that is a hot take.

Jami Aren't they in Indiana? Like they're on a plane?

Dan: Yes.

Jami It is not a geographically correct storyline-

Dan: No. There's so much wrong about it. But for all the things that are tropes in this movie, they use the tropes and they do well in that movie, which it doesn't ever happen. So I typically say that is my favorite one that I've watched, even though it's not Hallmark.

Annie: Very good. Guys, thanks so much for doing this with us today. You are welcome back.

Dan: This was great.

Annie: Anytime, we loved it, and we will get everybody pointed toward *I'll Be Home for Christmas Movies*. That sounds like the best and y'all covered a very merry mix up, which is all I need to purchase-

Dan: Done and done.

Annie: Is there anything we didn't say that you want to make sure we say?

Dan: No.

Bran: I don't think so.

Dan: I feel good about it.

Annie: Y'all, that was really, really fun.

Dan: Awesome. Thanks, we appreciate it.

Annie: For real, thanks so much.

[01:06:44] <Music>

Annie: You guys, Bran, Panda, Dan, love them.

Jen That was so fun.

Annie: That was so fun, they're the best. And now we're like dreaming of let's do like a live thing in '22. We're all in the same room and we got friends in the audience, and this needs to be a thing.

Jen What if it's tied to some one of the events like a Rama drama or Christmas-

Annie: All right, maybe that's a good idea.

Jami Dream big.

Annie: Yeah.

Jen Let's think about it.

Annie: I love all those movies we created too, that's so funny. So friends. Listen, don't forget you can go to the Instagram's mine, Deck the Hallmark and you can save this same scorecard, what do y'all call it? Like draft card?

Jen Draft card.

Annie: Yeah, and create your movie and then post it. Tag us all and make sure you name your movie as well. We want to hear the name. We want to see who you have in it. You can tag the actors and extras if you want you can go whatever you want. Listen, before we leave, we said we'll talk about one thing when we got back here, Hearties versus Hurtings. We talked about it a little bit with the guys. But Jamie-

Jami Are they doing a Christmas movie this year? I haven't seen any.

Annie: I don't think so.

Jen Only When Calls the Heart.

Annie: Okay, so When Calls the Heart, Daniel Lissing dies, dies dead.

Jami Jack. Mountie Jack.

Annie: Mountie Jack is dead. And now what's the update?

Jami GAC Family? So there's a spin-off show there was two girls that were on, I don't know what three or four episodes.

Annie: Yeah. They were like teachers?

Jami Run an orphanage?

Jen They ran an orphanage.

Annie: Ran an orphanage.

Jami And what's the spin-off show? *When Hope Calls*.

Jen When Hope Calls.

Annie: Okay, so it was another book by the same author?

Jami And it was airing, when it first started, I think, it was like only on Hallmark Movie Now.

Jen Yeah.

Jami Like on demand. It wasn't airing on the network. But it has since moved to GAC Family and they are bringing back Laurie Laughlin.

Annie: Yes.

Jami And Daniel Lissing.

Annie: How?

Jen How?

Jami You know it has to be a flashback?

Jen Yeah.

Jami It just cannot be that soap opera-ry that they'd like brought someone back from the dead. Like maybe he hasn't, I mean, they go in depth storyline about him and his brother. So him having like a twin we don't know about feels like-

Annie: How do we watch it? Is GAC Family on MyTV?

Jen It's on MyTV.

Jami So Jen and I both use the Friendly app and GAC Family is part of that network and channels.

Annie: And can you watch When Hope calls?

Jami I don't know. I've never looked, I'm sure I could. And I think it airs in December.

Annie: Okay.

Jami Yeah, I don't think it's on right now, but it's coming. But the new season is in-

Annie: Wow. Okay.

Jami So we have a X Hallmark Mystery on-

Annie: Yeah, I'm very interested. What do we not say about Hallmark Christmas Movies 2021 that we need to say?

Jen I do think there's a lot coming up that look like they're going to be better and Hallmark usually does that like the stronger movies are closer to Christmas.

Annie: Closer to the holidays.

Jen Yeah. Especially Thanksgiving often air.

Annie: Yes. And we have a scorecard from last year I'll post it again if anybody wants to use it. Would you have a scorecard that you can do to each movie-

Jami Oh, yeah, how many Boston trees.

Annie: Yeah, how many Boston trees you can get the movies. So we do have that scorecard but I can't wait to see people build their own Hallmark Movie.

Jami I just want to hear the title. Titles alone is just going to bring so much life this holiday season.

Annie: Listen, Red Hot Christmas that Brandon said, I couldn't. That movie was so good, all of them did. I thought that was really, really great. All right, say Last thing we always ask, we got two questions actually. What people are hearing around this episode is the guests from the whole year have been telling us their favorite Christmas song. So will you start by telling us what is your favorite Christmas song?

Jen Okay, I'm going to go with what came in my head first.

Annie: Yeah, go.

Jen "Mary Did You Know."

Annie: Oh, I do love that too.

Jami I love that one. I think mine might be "Happy Christmas War Is Over" which.

Annie: What?

Jami The faces I'm getting from both Annie and Jen-

Annie: Wait, I don't know, [Crosstalk 01:10:24] the war is over. What are you talking about?

Jami Yeah. I can't think of how it goes it's my favorite. I have a whole playlist of people who have covered the song, I love Celine Dion's cover. I love Jessica Simpson's cover.

Annie: "Happy Christmas, The War is"-

Jami It's just called "Happy Christmas" The War is Over is in parentheses, but most people just call "Happy Christmas."

Jen Feels like an aggressive title.

Jami It's a very aggressive-

Annie: Very aggressive, yeah, for sure. Okay. All right, and the last question we always ask because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Jami I think I'm ready for a break. Like what sounds fun to me is just like the slower pace, for me, some people the holiday season ramps up. But the closer to Christmas more is what I'm thinking, the slowdown, especially, the week between Christmas and New Year's.

Annie: Oh, the week between Christmas and New year.

Jami That week just like the ability to-

Annie: I don't know what day it is.

Jami The ability to be lazy. I don't know when I've put on hard pants, I couldn't tell you, I haven't showered, I'm just chilling. There is not another week where that feels like you can do it even on vacation.

Annie: Yeah.

Jami There's things to do or you're traveling, so there's just something really special about that week every year.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, good answer. Jen?

Jen I think now that it's cold here, I think sitting around like a fire pit with friends sounds super fun.

Annie: Ah, that does sound fun. Are we making anything on the fire pit?

Jen I mean, smores always feel like a good idea.

Annie: Yes. Is it you or Rebecca Lyons who taught me to put a Reese cup instead of chocolate.

Jen I mean, a Reese's cup is so good.

Annie: I did not know that,

Jami That's strong leadership whoever it was. Bless them.

Jen At my birthday last year, y'all had lots of options for smores.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. So I guess it was Rebecca who taught me because we did have a smorgasbord for your birthday. Yes. That was very fun. Y'all, thank you again, for coming to year five.

Jami Thank you again for having us every year.

Jen Thanks again for having us every year.

Annie: It's a treat. It's an absolute treat. Year six let's do it live. Why not?

Jami Why not?

Annie: That sounds fun.

Jami There's nothing else as podcasts leads towards something that sounds fun.

[01:12:24] <Music>

Annie: Oh, you guys, don't you love them? I know. I know. Make sure you're subscribed to Deck the Hallmark so you don't miss any of their episodes. Grab a copy of their book, *I'll Be Home for Christmas Movies* and go follow them, you guys we have to stay friends with them. Okay, we just have to. Tell them thanks for being on the show and yes, of course we have that make-your-own-Hallmark-movie board available for you. Just hop over to my Instagram stories and grab it thank you to our amazing designer Kate Cell for making it so cute.

Be sure to tag me as you make your Hallmark movie directorial debut. I cannot wait to see what you guys come up with and I'm very excited about Dreidel, Dreidel, Dude Ranch. I'm very proud of it.

If you need anything else from me you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, all the places you may need me that's how you can find me. That's it for today, friends go out or stay home but do something that sounds fun to you. I'll do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is doing another show tomorrow. So y'all have a great day. We'll see you back here tomorrow. You guys, day two of our 12 Day Christmas Party. Day two is Porsha Williams from Real Housewives of Atlanta. I know. I know. We'll see you tomorrow.

[01:13:36] <Music>

Mac: Hey guys, this is Mac Powell my new album is called *New Creation* go check it out. But my favorite, favorite Christmas song and believe me Christmas is special to me, I was born on Christmas Day. So I love Christmas. I love Christmas music. My favorite of all time is Blue Christmas, by Elvis. You can't beat it.

Rachel: Hey guys, this is Rachel Cruz author of *Know Yourself Know Your Money*, and my favorite Christmas song is Silver Bells, because it reminds me of New York City and I love New York.

Thad: Hi, this is Thad Cockrell. My album *If In Case You Feel The Same* came out June of 2020. And my favorite Christmas song would be Why Christmas.

Annie: Okay, great, why?

Thad: Oh, I just love it. Yeah, like Christmas, you know I'm not really an astrologer person. But Christmas is this season for nostalgia and if you're going to do it, you know what I mean, if you're going to eat ice cream, you don't go buy fat-free ice cream.

Annie: That's right.

Thad: No,

Annie:No. Do it,

Thad: First of all, it won't satiate you. Like, go buy the full fat, go do it, right.

Annie:Mh-hmm.

Thad: So like, three scoops, whatever, you know. So it's like, why do I like, why is it my favorite? Because it doubles down on nostalgia. It's like so over the top, like sappy and nostalgic that there's is no way, it has its way with you, you know what I mean?

Annie: Yes, that's right.

Thad: There's no way to do but just love it.

Annie:That's exactly bright.

[01:15:29] <Music>