



Courtesy of imdb.com

Santa Claus, portrayed by Jeff Gillen, and Ralph "Ralphie" Parker, portrayed by Peter Billingsley, appear in a scene from the holiday classic "A Christmas Story."

## Day of 'Christmas Story' an annual treat for many

Last year, my husband and I celebrated our first Christmas together as husband and wife. So for the first time, I got to experience his Christmas traditions.

But when it comes to Christmas television traditions, he really only has one — "A Christmas Story." So I sat down and watched the movie with him for the very first time.

Yes, you read it correctly. Last year is the first time I had ever watched one of the most well-known Christmas movies of all time. I had heard most of the movie's classic lines and had even seen a few scenes over the years. But I had never sat down and watched it from beginning to end until last Christmas.

Now in my book, it's definitely no "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation," but it's still a cute holiday tale that the whole family can watch together. And once again this year, there will be plenty of times to watch it as TBS celebrates the 15th edition of "24 Hours of 'A Christmas Story.'"

For those of you out there who still haven't seen it, the 1983 "Story" follows Ralphie (Peter Billingsley), a young boy who only wants one thing for Christmas — a Red Ryder BB gun — even though his mother (Melinda Dillon) insists



Angela  
**HENDERSON-  
BENTLEY**

he'll shoot his eye out. We also meet Ralphie's goofy little brother, Randy (Ian Petrella), and his eccentric father (Darren McGavin) who has just won a very special award — a leg lamp. The movie is narrated by Jean Shepherd, the author of the short stories upon which "Story" is based.

My husband says that the appeal of the movie for him is that it takes him back to a simpler time. It takes him back to his childhood when he was excited about waking up Christmas morning and opening presents. Now as an adult, things are more complicated as you have to figure out how to pay for all of the presents and argue about whose family gets to see you on what day.

And hearing it put that way, it's hard to argue with the movie's appeal. Obviously my husband is not alone in his thinking as according to a TBS press release, an accumulated audience of more than 50 million viewers watched last year's

marathon over the 24 hours.

I guess a lot of us need to be transported to a simpler time these days. And I think we all can use a reminder of the wonder and excitement of Christmas.

"24 Hours of 'A Christmas Story'" kicks off Christmas Eve at 8 p.m. on TBS.

If you're looking for a more dramatic family to spend your Christmas with, let me recommend spending the holiday with The Cohens of my beloved "The O.C." SOAPnet is offering a four-hour marathon of the show's classic episodes featuring Chrismukkah, Seth Cohen's (Adam Brody) super holiday combining Christmas and Hanukkah. The best of the four is the first one, "The Best Chrismukkah Ever," where the Cohens' newest member, Ryan (Ben McKenzie), is first introduced to the holiday.

"Chrismukkah-time in the OC" runs from 3-7 p.m. on Christmas Day.

But however you end up spending your holiday, I hope you and yours make it a happy one.

**Angela Henderson-Bentley writes about television in her "Stay Tuned" blog at [www.herald-dispatch.com](http://www.herald-dispatch.com). Contact her at [ahendersonbentley@herald-dispatch.com](mailto:ahendersonbentley@herald-dispatch.com).**