



The Rocket Review

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Issue Editor: Alisa Valdez

HEADLINE OF THE MONTH:

Dems Take Control of House, But GOP Keeps Senate.

By Sal DiMaggio

Tuesday, November 6, was nail-biting for all those concerned in the midterm elections. All day, citizens cast their votes, deciding who would lead their country. Millions of people stayed up late to watch the results come in.

Although some results are still too close to call, it looks like the Democrats have taken the House of Representatives, while the Republicans have maintained control of the Senate. This will let the Democrats have a say in what goes on, as opposed to the past two years of GOP control. But the conservatives in the Senate may prove to be an issue for them. Lots of arguments are expected to happen up on Capitol Hill.

President Trump seems to be happy with the results of the election. He tweeted constantly through the election, congratulating winners and proclaiming a big victory. However, he didn't say anything about the Democrats taking a majority in the house.

Some races were to the wire, with delayed results and extremely close margins. In Arizona, Kyrsten Sinema (D) just beat Martha McSally (R) by 1.7% of the vote in the race for the Senate. In Florida, it appears that Rick Scott (R) defeated incumbent Senator Bill Nelson (D), but the race is so close that there is a state-mandated recount. Scott currently has 4,098,107 votes (50.1%), while Nelson has 4,085,545 (49.9%).

In New Jersey, Senator Bob Menendez (D) easily managed to keep ahold of his seat, defeating opponent Bob Hugin (R), despite the swirl of accusations surrounding him. Menendez took 53.7% of the vote, while Hugin took only 43.1%. Representative Frank Pallone (D) was also re-elected, crushing challenger Rick Pezzullo (R), winning by over thirty percent.

It looks like a bumpy two years ahead in Washington, with the Republican Senate and President facing off against the newly elected Democratic House. Will the GOP be able to complete their to-do list, or will the Dems stand in their way? Only time will tell.

Funny Christmas Story

By : Zak Carter

Now that we are within the Christmas season, some things are bound to happen. Lots of food, lots of eggnog, but there is one more thing that sometimes I just come to dread during this season. This would have to be taking pictures with Santa. When it comes to Christmas, my parents get very sentimental, and need to have our pictures taken with Santa in order to commemorate the occasion. Personally, I don't really like doing it, but I do it because everyone in the family pretty much does. We go to Costco, and there would be many people dressed as elves and then Santa. There were lots of decorations, but there was also something else that lured me in. This would come to be all of the Christmas treats that were stacked in Costco.

From cookies to chocolate, candy canes to cookies, there is anything you can imagine being at a Christmas event. This was, and still is the redeeming factor for me and keeps bringing it back. Now, while I may have found a way to justify going to this event, my siblings on the other hand. . . Let's just say they haven't quite found that reason, yet. My younger brother is pretty much the same as me. We come, have some food, and try to enjoy our time to the best of our ability. My younger sister has a bit more of a difficult time period.

Normally, there is some type of scene that must happen involving her, but I feel like that is just justified by her being young. My baby brother had the most interesting time I could think of, though. This moment just stuck with me because of how funny it is, and the fact that we have pictures to remember it happening. My youngest brother had to do the same as us, which would be taking pictures with Santa. This may not have gone very well for him, though. Things seemed fine before the dramatic scene that occurred, and my baby brother even wanted to go sit in Santa's lap. My mom then began to bring my brother up to go with Santa, and this is when the explosion happened. My baby brother gives one look at Santa, and immediately regrets his decision. He bursts into tears on Santa's lap and struggles to break free. Between Santa's awkward look because he didn't know what to do and my baby brother crying in his lap trying to break free, I don't know what was funnier to me. All I know is that it stuck with me, and probably the rest of my family too considering we have a picture of the incident stuck to the refrigerator.

People taking their pets to see Santa? It's more likely than you think

By Miechel Krulik

It's that time of year again, the time for holiday cards, family pictures, and people taking their furry friends to go see Santa. Now you may think that I'm joking but I'm telling the truth, some people do take their pets to see Santa. There are many places nearby to take your pets to meet Santa. I find this website helpful when looking for [Places in New Jersey to get pictures with Santa](#). I personally think that pets are part of the family so why not take them to see Santa, right? It seems that some people agree with me as there are numerous photos online of pets with Santa, so I have decided to compile some of my favorite pictures of pets meeting Santa. If you have ever brought(or are planning to) take your pet to see Santa please send pictures to

21mkrulik@hazlet.org. So without further adieu here are some of my favorite photos of pets meeting Santa!



John
@jjmontaldo

Follow

My dogs favorite toy is Santa, so we brought her to see him
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The Gift of Family (short story)

By: Matthew Fedorco

My name is Henry. I'm seven years old. Both my mother and I have to go visit my dad at the hospital. He won't be staying with us for Christmas, which really stinks. We've been going through a real rough time lately because my dad has to go through all these treatments and stuff, but it's kinda weird. Can't they just give him some medicine or something to make him feel better? That's what mommy does when I don't feel good.

Anyways, when we were passing by a Target, my eyes lit up like Christmas lights.

"Mommy, can we go to Target?" I asked.

"Not now," she responded, "Maybe after we see daddy if you're a good boy." As I was about to scream bloody murder, I realized tomorrow was Christmas Day, so I'd have plenty of time to play with toys then.

When we got to the hospital, it was so cold, my body shivering as I stepped out of the car and the snowflakes fell down on me. The waiting room was pretty crowded in the hospital, so we got some hot chocolate from across the street at this cafe place. Mhm, hot chocolate, dad's favorite.

We got him one, too, to make him feel a bit better. After I was done with my hot chocolate, I stared at my dad's cup, I wanted to indulge in another steaming cup, but as I tried to take a sip my mom pulled it away, "That's for daddy, you had your cup, don't be selfish."

They finally let us see him, so I went running into his arms screaming, "Daddy!"

He answered back saying, "Hey kiddo, it's great to see ya. I'm sorry I can't be with you and mommy tonight but I have to get all better here at the hospital."

"It's okay. It's too bad though because I would've liked have you there to watch me open my presents."

All of a sudden, his eyes directed towards mom, "You haven't told him yet?"

She said, "Oh my gosh, I forgot to tell Henry."

"What?"

"Listen Henry, we know how excited you are about Christmas but, you see me and daddy have been going through a really rough time with money and stuff for his treatment to help him get all better. There isn't going to be any presents this year, I hope you will understand."

I suddenly became enraged "No presents, what, no presents! What is Christmas without presents! I hate both of you, you never do anything for me, all you care about is yourselves!" I stormed out of the hospital and sat in the car until mom drove me home. The car ride was silent, and I stormed into my room and immediately buried my head in my pillow.

The next day, I came moping down the stairs, only to find all of my presents under the tree. I sprinted down and tore the first one up. I looked at it for a couple seconds, then realized it was a tombstone, and it said... Dad!

I woke up again, afraid. Was it only a dream, I wondered. I hear the opening of the front door downstairs and I exhilarated to see mommy. As I gave her a big hug, I said, "Hey Mom, Merry Christmas! I love you. When are we gonna see dad?"

"Sure, but, aren't you bummed out about not having any presents?"

"Nah, I'm just happy to have you guys! C'mon, let's go!"

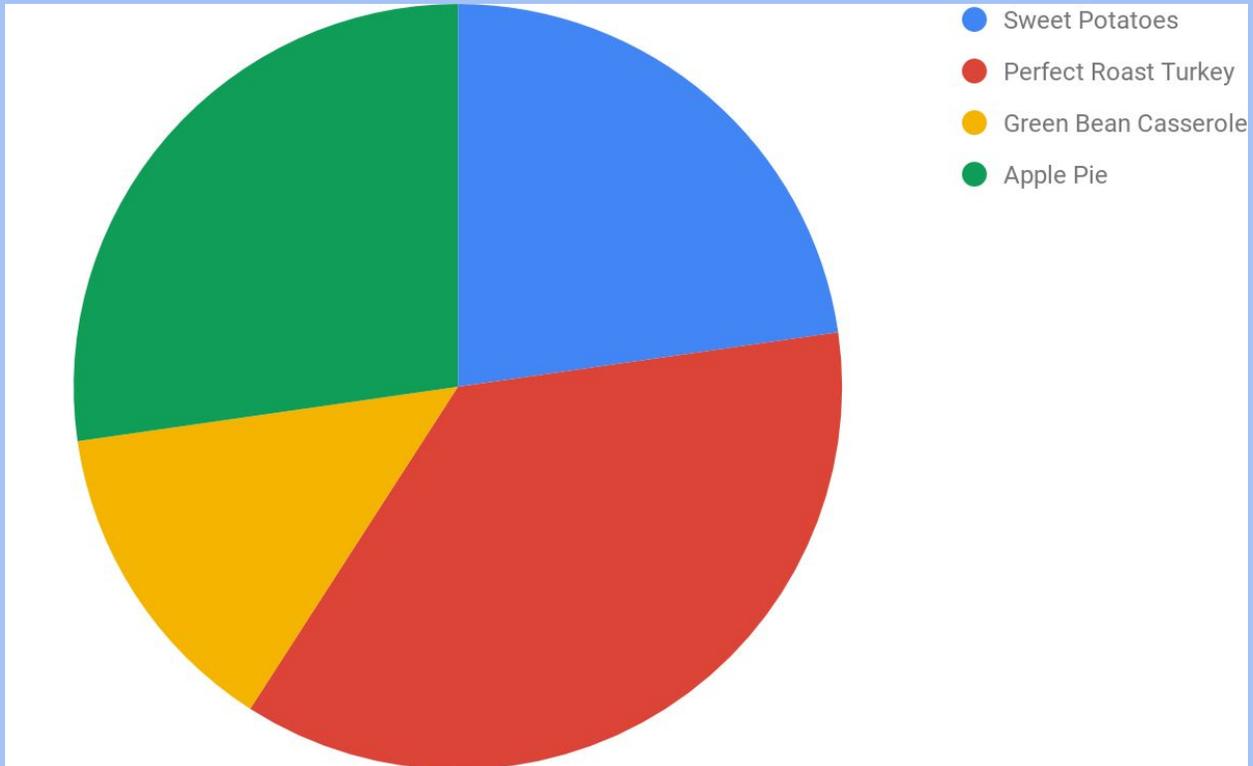
Quiz Corner

By: Zak Carter

Ever wanted to know what your spirit animal is? How about the monster that you are most afraid of? Well, here in the quiz corner, you can figure out all of that and more! All you need to do is take the poll and get the answers to your questions in no time!

Last Month's Quiz...

Last month in the 'November' article, we asked everyone what their favorite Thanksgiving food was, and we have certainly gotten results!



It looks like the Perfect Roast Turkey took the lead on this one! And sadly enough, green bean casserole still goes unappreciated. But don't let that stop you from trying it!

This Month in the Quiz Corner...

Isn't it wonderful? With snow in the air and a nice cold, crisp breeze. The trees are without leaves and glittering snow piles on the ground. The winter season is here, and with it comes Christmas. But you know what some people like most about Christmas? Movies! We'd like to know what your favorite Christmas character from a movie is!

[What is your favorite Christmas character?](#)

Christmas Eve Fiasco

By Miehchel Krulik

My funny holiday story may not be funny to you but, now when I look back on it I realize how dumb I was for doing this and now I laugh at it. It was Christmas Eve and I made a decision that was possibly the dumbest thing a kid could do. So when I was five or six I decided it was a good idea to go over to my stocking and look into it before we went to my grandma's house. Everyone was getting ready so I thought it was the perfect time because no one would catch me, (who could blame me I was young!) but the thing with looking in my stocking was that it was on a shelf. On this shelf were four stocking holders one for each of my family members. Now, these stocking holders were pure, solid, heavy metal and me being a curious child, I decided to pull on



my stocking. The moment I did this I regretted it, the stocking holder came down on my nose. My nose then started bleeding so I did what any child would do I stood there. When my mom heard the crash she came running over and all she saw was the stocking holder on the floor and my nose bleeding, she ran into the kitchen and got paper towels and she got my sister and dad into the car so we could go to the hospital.

For it, being Christmas Eve there were a lot of people in the hospital waiting room, and of course, I was one them. This amount of people would result in two hours of waiting and a very unhappy, tired and hungry Mish (Mish is my nickname). After the two hours of waiting, I was finally seen by a doctor who said I had to have an X-ray. Now as a child, the X-ray machine absolutely terrified me, but the kind nurses told me I would be okay and I believed them. After I got the X-ray it was time for more waiting. After fifteen minutes we were brought back into a room and they told my parents that I had a hairline fracture, (all we were told was to ice it to keep the swelling down). After that fun time, we were back in the car on the way home to finish getting dressed. After we were all dressed, we got into the car again and after some time we arrived at my grandma's house. We ended up being two hours late because I decided to be curious, I made it out alive and I now have a scar on my nose to forever remind me of my immense amount of curiosity as a child.

Christmas Story

By: Matthew Fedorco

My dad gathered the children around, including me, to go out and look at Christmas lights while the rest of the adults stayed back. I couldn't really tell you exactly how old I was, maybe 7 or 8, I don't know. I remember the ugly gray seats of my father's Lexus, I remember the smell of it. We don't have that crummy car anymore, I still miss it. We drove around a couple blocks looking out the windows so closely our breath fogged them up and smooshed our noses against the glass. I remember looking at those glowing lights and my eyes lighting up back at them. They were beautiful to me. I look at them now and they don't shine quite as bright. After a while of seeing all the glowing lights of every color you think of, plastic reindeer, and inflatable snowmen, we decided to head back to the house. As we walked into the house, we found the living room cluttered with presents. The adults walked back into the room as well, looking just as surprised as we were. My mom said that Santa must have come while we were gone. Everyone proceeded to gather around in the center to watch the children open up their presents. The satisfaction of ripping open wrapping paper surged through our little bodies. There were happy dances, gleaming smiles, and socks.

I fantasize about times like those when everything was simple. There are so many times that I wish I could have back. Christmas is relaxed now. There are no trips in crappy Lexus' to go see Christmas lights, there are no cookies left out for Santa, but there is family. When we go home after the party, we do glance out the windows to the lights, but as the years go by, our faces drift farther away from the windows, and the lights seem to dim more and more.

Sal's Funny Christmas Story

By: Salvatore DiMaggio

Christmas is a very special time in my family. My mom goes all out in decorating the house and hosting the Christmas Eve party, and my piously religious grandmother keeps on reminding us of the importance of the holiday. She gives us prayers to say and goes on and on about how we all have to be good Christians.

One of my favorite Christmas memories is from last year. It's Christmas Eve, and my mom and grandma are rushing to get the house ready for the party later that night. The rest of my family is in the living room when we hear a crash from the dining room.

We rush in to find my grandmother standing over the nativity scene she knocked down. The statue of Saint Joseph was beheaded, and my grandmother has her hands up. "I'm so sorry!" she says to my mother.

And then: "I'm sorry to you, too, Saint Joseph!"

Luckily, we were able to hot glue the statue back together, and no one knew at the party until we told them. So when we were decorating the house this year, my mom goes to my grandma, "Now, Mom, without decapitating anyone..."

It's because of special family moments like these that I love the holidays so much. I look forward to many more holidays spent with the ones I love.

Conspiracy Corner Volume #3

By: Tyler Herbert

Aliens

"Aliens" is an incredibly broad topic I can not possibly cover in 3-5 paragraphs. So I'll cover a specific event. The most famous alien investigation of all time. The Roswell crash.

The year was 1947. The location was Roswell, New Mexico. A "flying disc" crashed onto a ranch. Many people credit this event as the beginning of America's fascination with UFO's. It is the "most famous, most exhaustively investigated and most thoroughly debunked UFO claim." This fascination with Roswell went on until it came to a head in 1991.

This when the US Military wrote 2 reports where they called the crashed object a "weather balloon." Still many claimed they knew what they saw. Unfortunately in court their testimonials were dismissed as they presented little evidence. And very few of these testimonials even described aliens.

In conclusion nobody knows what happened on that fateful day. But it created an entire subculture in American society. Based around conspiracy and wonder.

A Frosty's Life

By: Alisa Valdez

Many people believe that Frosty the Snowman is always happy and providing snow and happiness to all the children of the world. But in reality that it only just a small spectrum of what he does. For the rest of the 364 days a year he lives in the North Pole with Santa Claus and he has a lot of responsibilities to take care of. We recently emailed Frosty and asked him to give us a run down of what his daily routine is like, and he was happy to write one for you guys. Here it is:

"Dear Rocket Review,

First I would like to say Happy Holidays to all the folks reading this because everyone needs a great holiday. Now many of you think I just go around different places to cheer up kids and bring back their Christmas spirit, but there is a lot more to me than meets the eye. First I start my mornings by waking up with my alarm blaring in my ear playing the song "Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree". After lying in bed 5 minutes after my alarm goes off I finally get out of bed to get ready for my day by taking an ice shower so I'm nice and refreshed for the day.

Next I got dressed in my usual attire with a scarf and hat. Ever since I came to life I have become sort of an international winter celebrity, just like Santa Claus. I have my own job, too, which is picking specific places each year to spend Christmas and bring joy to those special kids who have either lost their way in the Christmas spirit or to help them spread more joy. While I'm not doing that I also make secret trips to children's hospitals and bring joy to the kids who are sick. Santa usually puts a spell on me so I won't melt in the hospital, but sometimes it's more fun to have a kid sneak me inside with a cooler. Other than that I go into my office and observe the world and choose what town I will go to spend the whole month of December with them.

After I pick a town I immediately start to pack and call up some of Santa's Elves to look after my house as I am away. I then call up Mr. Claus to tell him where I am going and we agree on a time for him to pick me up after he's finished giving his Christmas gifts on Christmas night. Majority of this makes up my day so all I have left is to just eat dinner and then off to sleep I go.

That's my daily routine from up until the end of October where we start to plan out Christmas but that's a different story for a different time. Now I need to hurry along because Mrs. Claus needs help making cookies for Santa but we all wish you Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas from our North Pole family to yours. :)

Happy Birthday!

Frosty The Snowman"

Christmas Story

By: Tyler Herbert

Every family has their own traditions for christmas. From what they eat to what they do. Some families have turkey and some have wrestling tournaments. My family's tradition is an aggressive "grab bag" game. Everyone brings one random gift that benefits no one directly. You take a number, when that number called you take a present, open it, it's yours. Until all the gifts are gone, yours can be stolen.

When the game starts, the gate to the sunroom closes. It's over. Everyone's a snake. Loyalty is thrown out the window. Me and my great aunt Ellie lock eyes. The psychological battle ensues.

Number 1 called, 2, called, 3, that's me. I open it up, a blanket. I already have a blanket. I need to steal. Number 4, 5, 6 are called. Then Number 7. My cousin Tommy opens that gift up. It's a mini fridge, exactly what I was hoping for!

"YOINK!" I yinked that mini fridge in under a second. I was incredibly excited to be able to store 3 soda's in my room. But I could tell, everyone was after my Mini Fridge. It swapped positions multiple times. Until we got to the last present, number 15. I had the mini fridge. The last gift was opened. The Mini Fridge was mine.

Cheap Holiday Gifts

By: Alisa the Cheapskate

Now I know that everyone is SO stressed out during this time of the year because you have to buy presents for friends, family, co-workers, in-laws, boyfriend/girlfriend, pet, etc. and everyone wants every gift to be the PERFECT gift but it always ends up to be just a bit too pricey. That's where I come in. You see I'm pretty creative and also a pro when it comes to making cheaper gifts look expensive so I have decided to teach you some gifts to make.

Ruffled Scarf:

- **SUPPLIES NEEDED:**
 - 1 XL or XXL t-shirt
 - 9" paper plate
 - Scissors
 - decorative pin/flower (optional)
- **DIRECTIONS**
 - lay t-shirt out flat (make sure you can get 8-12 circles)
 - Use paper plate to trace 8-12 circles on t-shirt (4-6 on each side of the shirt)
 - cut out circles
 - cut each fabric circle into a spiral
 - stretch each piece of fabric and lay all pieces together
 - tie around your neck and place a pretty rosette flower pin to dress it up!

Everything In a Jar:

For this gift there are 3 different types of jars that you can make and they all look pretty helpful for when you need it and they're also really cute.

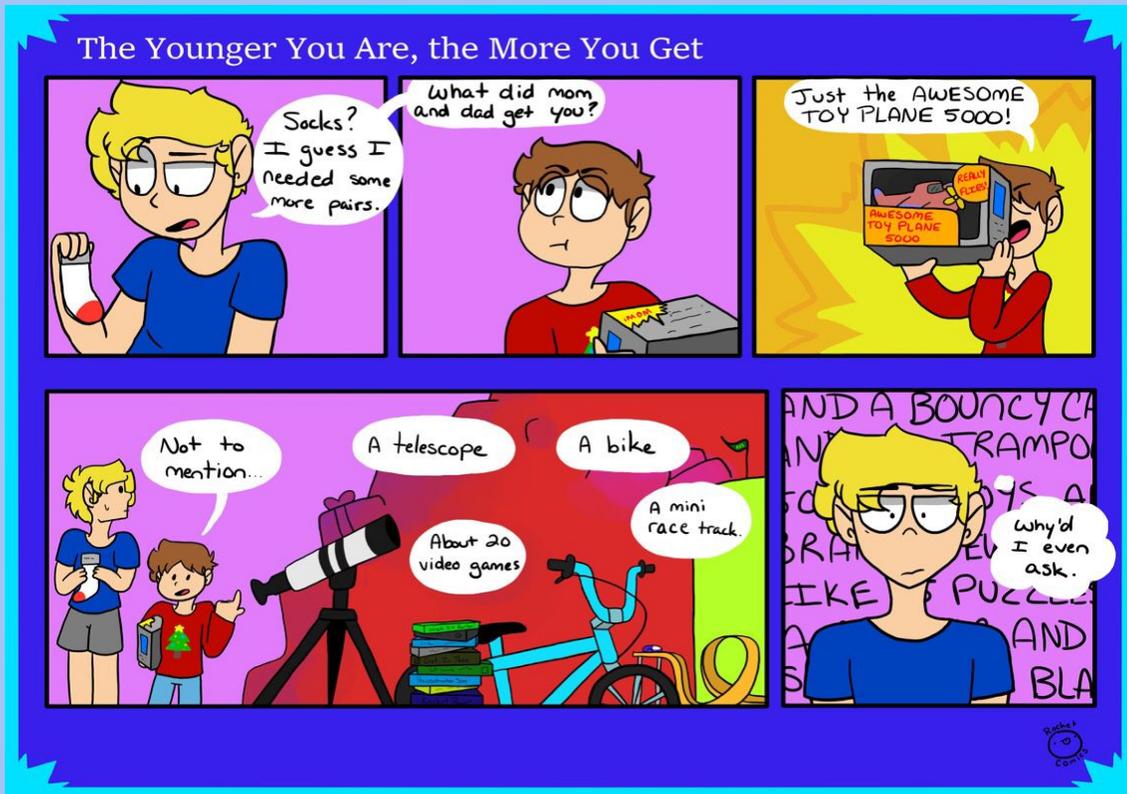
- **{Energy} in a jar**
 - Peanuts
 - White Chocolate Hot Drink Mix
 - Suisse Mocha Latte Mix
 - White Chocolate Macadamia Nut Energy Bar
 - Milk Chocolate Truffles

- **{Pampering} in a jar**
 - Cozy Socks
 - Sunshine Daisy Lotion
 - Sunshine Daisy Fragrance Spray
 - Moisture Rich Hand Crème
 - Soothing Massage Bar Soap
 - Eye Treatment Cream

- Facial Scrub
- Lip Balm

- **{Refreshment} in a jar**
 - Facial Cleansing Towelettes
 - Wrinkle Release Spray
 - Disposable Mini Toothbrushes
 - Tide To Go Mini Pen
 - Peppermint Gum
 - Peppermint Altoids
 - Mini Brush and Mirror Combo

After you fill those jars you just decorate them with whatever you want and the it's all set and ready to go to the person who you made it for or if you make them for yourself then I hope you enjoy it and spread it around to friends!



Comic Strip By: Madelyn Primiano