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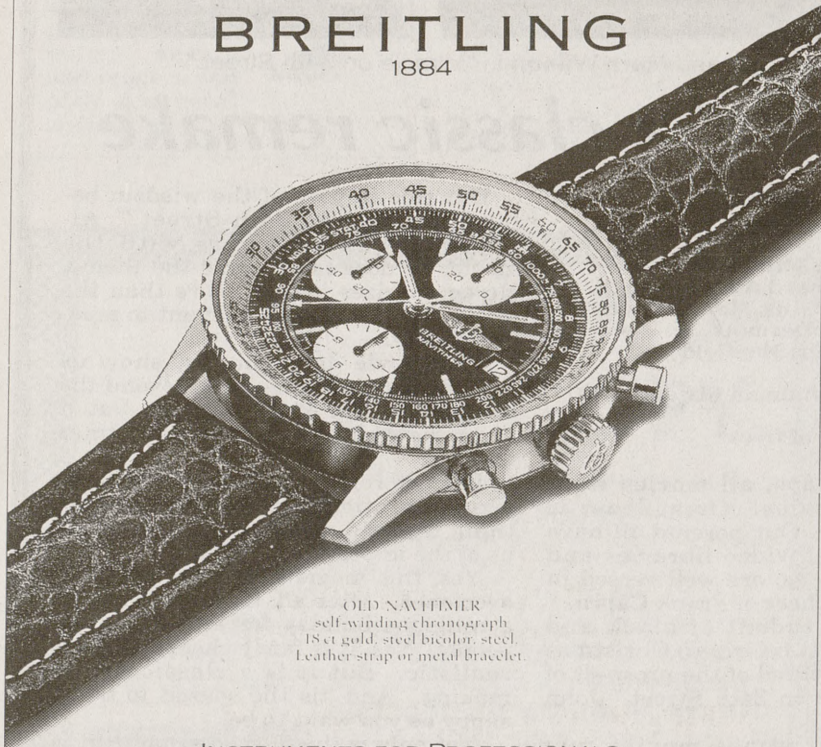
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**Benefit album fails at reproduction of classics**

By **Jeremy Keddie**  
 THE BATTALION

Hello Dave  
 "A Hello Dave Christmas With Friends"  
 country western  
 Mountain Records  
 \* 1/2 (out of five)

"A Hello Dave Christmas with Friends" is Hello Dave's sour attempt at reproducing nine popular Christmas carols.

Proceeds generated from sales of the CD go to benefit Camp Heartland, a summer camping program devoted to the needs of children afflicted with or affected by AIDS. The organization provides recreational opportunities for children impacted by AIDS.

"Winter Wonderland" begins with an acoustic guitar blues riff, but soon collides with a western-style organ accompaniment. The song is moving, with the organ taking the lead in original composition. However, tightness throughout the song is lacking.

The band rearranged "The Drummer Boy," complete with slide guitars. The song is traditional and deviates only with Dan Fiestam's guitar playing. The effect results in a twisted western Christmas carol with a touch of Pink Floyd guitar effects.

"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" is a strictly western arrangement and includes the accordion playing of Simon Sweet. The arrangement is delightfully fresh, with the addition of Cary Pierce, of Jackpierce, on backup vocals.

The fourth track, "What Child is This," just does not work at all. The drum intro is interesting and progressive, yet does not match well with the chorus. The arrangement of the song also allows for the addition of violins, which carries the piece that would otherwise fall flat on its face.

"The Christmas Song," with the familiar lyric "chestnuts roasting on an open fire,"

follows the traditional western style of the group. However, the song has the same problem as the others. The group is simply not tight. The result is a Christmas carol without the "Christmas."

"We Wish You a Merry Christmas" is performed as an open group. It sounds similar to a drunken college Christmas party, with a bit too much eggnog, complete with a few seconds of unnecessary random screaming and celebrating at the end.

Throughout the CD, the backup vocals are off-rhythm with the lead, and deviations from the traditional rhythms of the carols are sloppy.

Each song seems to be pushing toward the western edge of music but often encompasses blues rock. It is interesting, almost humorous, but leaves your wondering what they had in mind.



Chicago band Hello Dave's Christmas album benefits a summer camp devoted to the needs of children whose lives have been affected by AIDS.

Hello Dave's production definitely adds a new twist to the traditional Christmas carols.

The album is a nice attempt at reinventing these carols, but it seems that with proceeds going to such a worthy cause, the group would have spent more time arranging the album.

**Soundtrack**

continued from page 3

surprisingly agile, yet relaxed. She is obviously having a lot of fun with her new and improved lyrics on "Jingle Bells."

Warwick gives a nice rendition of "It's Beginning to Look A Lot like Christmas," though she doesn't sound as if she's as excited about the holiday season as Cole.

Perhaps she's been busy with her Psychic Friends Network.

Kenny G's "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas" is as sweet and warm as freshly baked Christmas cookies. Unfortunately, they only included one track featuring his saxophone. You'll find yourself asking for seconds.

In fact, the only down side of this album is that each artist is only featured once. It would have been nice to hear more from each of them.

**Santa**

continued from page 3

mother and all his friends that Allen is the real Santa Claus.

Allen finds a hard time disputing the idea after he begins gaining weight and growing Santa's famous gray beard uncontrollably.

When the next Christmas rolls around, Allen's son is the one who convinces him that millions of children everywhere are depending on him and what he stands for.

Allen puts in a great performance as the Christmas legend, us-

ing his comical abilities to keep the audience laughing. Santa's elves also contribute a great deal to the movie, helping viewers to appreciate the fun side of the holiday.

Perhaps the best performance, however, comes from one of Santa's faithful reindeer, Comet. Most people can't imagine seeing reindeer fly, but who would ever imagine a reindeer with an attitude?

While "The Santa Clause" isn't as touching as many Christmas classics, it is a movie that the whole family can enjoy. And it does an excellent job of filling all who see it with the Christmas spirit.

**Miracle**

continued from page 3

"The Santa Clause," it is because old movies have stood the test of time and continue to show us the true meaning of Christmas. And this is one old movie that has been remade extremely well.

If you have never seen the original, you will be able to enjoy the classic for the first time. If you don't think remakes are ever as good as the original, then prepare to be proven

wrong.

And if you are planning to see it, but haven't yet wait. Save it, like that gift you receive from your grandma but can't open until Christmas. Use it as a motivational tool to get through finals.

And when you go home, drag mom and dad out to see it with you. They will realize that this old Christmas story was not slaughtered by a modern remake. This story has been retold to a new audience, and it is as magical as ever.

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