

# The REGISTER FORUM

Established 1891

VOL. 129, NO. 4

CAMBRIDGE RINDGE AND LATIN SCHOOL

DECEMBER 2016

## CRLS Lends Support after 10-Alarm Fire in East Cambridge

By  
Grace Ramsdell  
*Register Forum  
Managing Editor*

On Saturday, December 3rd, a 10-alarm fire engulfed the Berkshire Street area in East Cambridge. Firefighters from around 20 communities were called to the scene, and the flames persisted for hours as emergency vehicles surrounded the neighborhood.

Much of the vicinity, including commercial areas of Kendall Square, lost power because of damaged circuits. Junior Maggie La-Master, who lives just a few streets away from the fire, told the *Register Forum*, “It was really scary, but I’m thankful that all [my family] lost was power. I can’t imagine how hard it must be for the people a block away.”

Junior Elaina Wolfson said she didn’t hear about the fire until late in the day, but once she found out, she wanted to help. That night, a shelter was set up in the War Memorial Building. “[I] knew shelter

was being given right at school, so I thought I would go,” said Wolfson. Describing the scene in the Field House that night, Wolfson added, “There were a bunch of cots and so much food [and] a small pile of clothes.”

An investigation into the origin of the fire began immediately, and according to a statement by the the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Fire Services, “the focus is on an accidental cause.” In a statement to the School Committee on December 6th, Superintendent Salim said that at that time it was confirmed that 28 Cambridge Public School students had been displaced by the fire.

During the week following the fire, Student Government set aside \$730 raised from bagel, popcorn, and general food sales before school and at lunch to donate to those affected.

Mayor Simmons established a GoFundMe page on December 3rd to support members of the community impacted by the fire. The initial goal of the Mayor’s Fire Relief



Pictured above: A sign at a house near Berkshire Street thanks first responders.

Photo Credit: Grace Ramsdell

Fund was \$500,000, an amount that was surpassed in just two days. At the time that this article is being printed, over \$662,000 has been raised in donations.

Ms. Milner, a dean from Learning Community R, noted, “Already people have started fraudulent GoFundMe pages to look like the mayor’s site, so it’s important that people go through the City Hall website to get to the right link.”

Additionally, cash donations

to the Mayor’s Fire Relief Fund can be made at CRLS through the Main Office by students who do not have a credit card, which is required in order to make donations online.

Students can also bring cash donations to the STARs classroom, 2201, which will be added to the donations in the Main Office. At the time that this article is being printed, the Main Office reports that just

*Continued on page 3*

## Free Menstrual Hygiene Products to be Supplied in Bathrooms Student Activists Inspire School Committee Motion for Pilot Program in 2017

By  
Ursula Murray-Bozeman  
*Register Forum Editor*

On December 6th, the School Committee unanimously passed a motion to create a pilot program that will put free menstrual hygiene products—tampons and sanitary pads—in high school bathrooms this year. Manikka Bowman, the head of the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee which wrote the motion, told the School Committee that she envisions supplying free products in all schools by the academic year 2018-19.

The motion was written after CRLS junior Sophie Harrington brought the issue to the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee in November. Harrington told the committee that she had done an English project in September with junior Pascal Beckert on providing free

pads and tampons in bathrooms and had realized it is an issue that CRLS should address. Harrington also created a petition which got over 500 signatures from students as well as teachers in just two weeks.

“You wouldn’t ask a boy to pay for toilet paper,” Harrington told the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee on November 29th, highlighting what she sees as the inequality in attention paid to male and female students’ health needs.

Currently, menstrual products

are available in Learning Community offices, the Teen Health Center, and in Wellness classrooms. Harrington told the committee that it takes approximately fifteen minutes for a student to get a pass to go to one of these locations, get a prod-

uct, go to the bathroom, and return to class. That’s nearly one fifth of a class period, and it can have a significant impact on a student’s learning. This inconvenience, as junior Juliette Low-Fleury emphasized in her testimony, can be exacerbated

by the embarrassment of asking both for a pass and for the product, especially from male teachers or clerks.

At the November 29th meeting, CPS Chief Operating Officer Mr. Maloney presented a startlingly high estimate of \$145,728 per year to provide free pads and tampons in CPS schools. He based his estimate on an assumed cost of 60 cents per product, with each female staff member and student using eight products a month. At both the subcommittee and regular School Committee meetings, students and parents argued against this prediction, saying that these supplies would be almost exclusively used in emergency situations, which would cut down on the number needed, and that products generally cost far less than 60 cents.

*Continued on page 2*



Juniors Juliette Low-Fleury, Sophie Harrington, and Grace McCartney testified before the School Committee.

Photo Credit: Mari Gashaw

## INSIDE THIS EDITION

### HATEFUL GRAFFITI

Nazi-inspired graffiti and hate-speech with references to Trump and lynching found in CRLS bathrooms.

**Around School, p. 2**

### CASEY AFFLECK



**A&E, p. 6**

### SANCTUARY CITY

Cambridge affirms its commitment to being a sanctuary city and protecting undocumented immigrants.

**Metro, p. 9**

### READY TO APPLY?



**Humor, p. 11**

### B-BALL PREVIEW

CRLS Boys Basketball is back and better than ever with much of last year’s starting lineup returning.

**Sports, p. 12**



REGISTER FORUM

Cambridge Rindge and Latin School  
459 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138  
twitter: @registerforum  
instagram: @registerforum  
snapchat: registerforum  
wikipedia: Register Forum  
bit.ly/crlsrf  
crlsregisterforum@gmail.com

Editor-in-Chief  
Diego Lasarte '17

Managing Editor  
Grace Ramsdell '18

Editors  
Adrienne Ashe '17  
Cecilia Barron '19  
Rafael Goldstein '17  
Nusrat Murray-Bozeman '17  
Sun-Jung Yum '19

Contributors  
Oscar Berry '19  
Caroline Daley '18  
Freddie Gould '18  
Harry Greenblatt '19  
Sophie Harrington '18  
Christo Hays '17  
Nusrat Lamisa Jahan '18  
Megan Kelliher '19  
Rosa Munson-Blatt '17  
Atticus Olivet '18  
Marina Pineda-Shokooh '18  
Shuvom Sadhuka '18  
Aidan Richards '19  
Charlotte Rosenblum '17  
Jonah Tauber '19  
Will Telingator '17

Faculty Advisor  
Steven Matteo

Established in 1891 as the C.M.T.S Register

“Listening to every voice,  
printing what you need to hear”

Free Tampons  
Continued from page 1

Low-Fleury brought boxes of tampons and pads to the December 6th meeting when she gave public comment. She testified that the tampons cost approximately 13 cents each, while the pads were slightly more expensive, but far lower in cost than Maloney’s estimate, at approximately 18 cents.

She added that she didn’t think people would take the supplies from the bathroom in bulk or even rely on them regularly, but that having the products available in bathrooms is important simply to prevent “female students [from] having that moment of panic” when they realize they are unprepared.

The Feminism Club has begun a movement to put baskets of free, student-bought tampons in girls bathrooms across the school.

Senior Alix Flores told the *Register Forum* that although there are products available in some bathrooms because of this student initiative, “Every gen-

der neutral bathroom should be stocked with hygienic products...this is a need not a want, and [products] should be provided by the school.”

Most girls bathrooms at CRLS have a dispenser where tampons and pads are advertised for 25 cents, but all of the dispensers have been left empty since the building was renovated.

The School Committee was supportive of the motion, despite the light-hearted jokes that members made when Low-Fleury brought out her example products. There was some concern that funding could not be supplied for the pilot initiative this year, as the district is already running a deficit.

However, the Committee decided that since they already supply some products in Learning Communities and Wellness classrooms, they will run this year’s pilot on what is already factored into the budget and focus on making the products more accessible.

Committee member Emily Dexter pushed for a faster effort on the motion, saying that a 20 month deadline was “modest.” If

the School Committee could create four upper schools in 18 months, she argued, they can certainly push a comparatively simple motion through the works in less time.

She called for supplies in bathrooms at CRLS, the extension school, at least one upper school, and at least one elementary school by next year.

However, her suggestion did not result in a change in the wording of the motion, as Ms. Bowman argued that the motion did not prohibit an increase in the number of schools or the adoption of a faster deadline if the Committee thinks it is possible as the pilot progresses.

The task force for the pilot will include CRLS students, the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee decided. Harrington told the *Register Forum* that the students who are involved hope to meet before winter vacation.

The Committee praised Harrington, Low-Fleury, and junior Grace McCartney, who also testified, for their maturity and determination.

CRLS Bathrooms Vandalized with Hateful Speech and Images  
Swastikas and Allusion to Lynchings Found with Reference to President-Elect Trump

By  
Diego Lasarte  
Register Forum Editor-in-Chief

**Editorial Note: A photo of the hateful image and language from the third floor boys bathroom was sent to the Register Forum. While we are not printing the photo due to its inflammatory nature, we are publishing the message from the wall in order to better inform the student body of the extent of the hate speech.**

On December 6th and 7th, hateful language and images were found in three separate boys bathrooms at Cambridge Rindge and Latin. Swastikas were drawn on the walls of two bathrooms, while the third floor boys bathroom had a swastika next to the message: “The power lost of this sign will be made great again with President Trump. We will rise southern rituals will prosper the world shall kneel in a past due [sic]. Our world will be of rule by certain and [writing unclear] fear to strike the hearts of so many.” On December 8th, two more instances of similar graffiti were found on the walls of the second and third floor girls bathrooms. On behalf of the CRLS administration, Principal Damon Smith

responded to the hate speech on December 7th with a strongly-worded email denouncing the act and the use of a “provocative and upsetting symbol.” Principal Smith reported that an investigation into the “racist, anti-Semitic and hateful graffiti” had begun in cooperation with the Cambridge Police Department. He followed up the next day with a school-wide announcement during homeroom, again condemning the graffiti and announcing a safe space for dialogue in the Main Cafeteria after school that day. Jewish Heritage Club held a meeting to process the incident the morning of December 8th. Superintendent Kenneth Salim also denounced the graffiti and told parents and students he had reported it to the state attorney general’s hotline for incidents of bias-motivated harassment. Principal Smith concluded his message to students, staff, and parents by promising that “if the responsible party is identified, appropriate action will be taken, up to and including disciplinary and legal action.” Some students were disappointed that the email message to students and families did not explicitly state that the message in

the third floor boys bathroom referenced President-elect Trump and “southern rituals,” which, according to the Anti-Defamation League, is a term for the practice of lynching African-Americans. Senior Maisha Lakri was frustrated that this language was not shared in the administration’s response, saying, “I would have liked to hear that information in an official capacity. We ended up having a discussion about [the graffiti] in class, and I didn’t know that there were specifics about Trump until another student showed us a photo that he had of the graffiti. This is knowledge we have to understand to understand the intentions behind the act.” Senior Julia Bluestein said she was not shocked by the hate speech, explaining, “The unfortunate part of this is that it isn’t at all surprising after all that has happened in the last few months. I hear anti-Semitic words all the time at Rindge....” Similarly, Comparative Govern-

ment teacher Ms. Hylton said that the reference to President-elect Trump was significant, commenting that “the way [Trump] uses language can create a hall pass for people to act out.” She added, “I wouldn’t want to say every Trump voter is racist, but I do think Trump has used language in the last few years that has made the thing you see in the bathroom, make this kid, think it’s acceptable now.” In the wake of these instances of hate speech, Student Body President Kester Messan-Hilla is conflicted about how to move forward, but he concluded, “I know that we need the space and time to process our feelings. In a school that is stricken by fear, there is a need for discussion...Discussion allows for truth and understanding. I can ensure that Student Government will be in communication with administration in establishing a safe platform for all students to speak their truths.”

**This article was made possible by student contributions. If you’re aware of newsworthy information at CRLS, please reach out to a member of the editorial board or email [crlsregisterforum@gmail.com](mailto:crlsregisterforum@gmail.com).**



# December School Committee Update

By  
Ursula Murray-Bozeman  
*Register Forum Editor*

## Free Menstrual Hygiene Products

After students testified at the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee Meeting and the December 6th meeting, a movement passed unanimously to create a pilot that will provide free menstrual hygiene products in bathrooms across the district.

*See front page article for more information*



*Pictured above: A student-drawn sketch of Superintendent Salim.  
Photo Credit: Caroline Daley*

**Response to Fire**  
Superintendent Salim gave the Committee an update about the district’s response to the fire that burned nearly a block on December 3rd. 28 CPS students were reported displaced, with 12 currently staying at local hotels and the rest staying with friends or family. Salim warned that these numbers will change, as not all families were registered with the Red Cross. Each affected family has been provided with a school contact who greeted students and parents at school

entrances on Monday morning. Transport has also been provided for students at hotels. Five staff members had damage to their homes and are also receiving school support.

Dr. Salim emphasized that the assistance the district is providing is “for the long term,” and that he realized that this is not a problem that can be solved in a matter of weeks. Mr. Fantini added that custodians at the War Memorial building had been extremely generous with their time, working for more than 24 hours straight to provide services to displaced families. He said that the Red Cross had praised Cambridge, saying it has been one of the best cities to work with on disaster relief.

**Superintendent to Meet with Athletic Department**  
The Committee unanimously passed a motion requiring the Superintendent and the Athletic Department to discuss coach evaluation and climate, the budget, and academic support for student athletes.

# CRLS RESPONDS: *What is your New Year’s resolution?*



**Miles Taylor**  
*Class of 2018*  
*“Finish all the MBTA bus routes”*

**Nico Mayer**  
*Class of 2020*

*“Get a job”*



**Jeynaba Jamanka**  
*Class of 2018*

*“Spend less money at Broadway”*



## East Cambridge Fire *Continued from page 1*

over \$70 have been donated. Regarding donating food and other supplies, students and staff can ask STARS teacher Ms. Lozada how to contribute.

According to Athletic Director Mr. Arria, both the Girls Hockey and Boys Hockey teams will be donating money raised at their games the weekend after the fire to the Mayor’s Fund, and other sports teams may make donations in the future.

Senior Andrique Fleurimond described his reaction to the fire, saying, “I believe that if I am a part of a community, I should do everything in my power to help out whenever I can.” Because of this, Fleurimond has organized a fundraiser to benefit the families affected by the fire.

The event will be hosted by Fleurimond’s company, DriqueSide, at the Cambridge Community Center on January 7th from 7 PM to 11 PM. Fleurimond explained, “There will be different performances—we will have dancing, spoken word, rapping [and] singing...We are calling it *The Phoenix: Arise from the Ashes*.” Additionally, there might be a guest performance from Vice-Principal Tynes at the event.

According to Ms. Milner, each Learning Community has gathered clothing donations for the impacted students in that LC and their families. However, Ms. Milner told the *Register Forum* that members of the community should be mindful that “it’s not just going to be one round of donations.” The effects of the fire on families in the community will be long-lasting.

Principal Smith concluded, “When this is not front page news anymore, we’ve got to remember...we have to stay committed in helping our classmates and Cantabrigians in rebuilding.”



*Clockwise from top: Firefighters on Berkshire Street; burned buildings on Berkshire Street one week after the fire.  
Photo Credit: Cambridge Chronicle (top), Grace Ramsdell (bottom)*



# Recognizing Who's to Blame for Lack of Dialogue

By  
Rafael Goldstein  
*Register Forum Editor*

Since the election, pundits have pointed to a host of reasons for Trump's victory. Many journalists and news anchors have argued that the Democrats' obsession with "PC culture" ultimately led to Clinton's downfall.

Mark Lilla of the *New York Times* wrote in an opinion piece a week after the election that this fixation with political correctness has "produced a generation of liberals and progressives narcissistically unaware of conditions outside their self-defined groups." The argument behind this idea is that political correctness stifles conversation and is therefore, as far as unity is concerned, unproductive.

I do understand, at least to some extent, that it is nearly impossible to create a more unified country without dialogue between political parties. A lack of dialogue is not doing anyone any good, especially when people are forced into their own bubbles. These bubbles reinforce their own ideas, rather than challenge

them or add new ones. My problem is not with the push towards conversation. Rather, it is with the idea of how these "productive" conversations should be brought about.

A common criticism of those on the left is that they are quick to label others. Terms like "racist" and "bigot" are all over social media and the news. Hillary Clinton received a great deal of backlash for her controversial comments in September, when she said "half" of Trump supporters are "deplorable." Regardless of whether these comments influenced voters' decisions, the "anti-political correctness" candidate won. Of course, there are certain

if you lead off by calling me a racist, before even talking to me?" is a question many Trump supporters have posed, often bashing the premise behind political correctness and identity politics.

The problem with this is that it fails to acknowledge that perhaps it is the racist or the bigot who is really the one stifling conversation. Just as you'd never ask a Jewish person to get a cup of coffee with a neo-Nazi, it is an unfair request to ask an African American to willingly sit down with someone who is a racist. The main problem with this expectation is that it puts the blame, and therefore the burden, of the conversation on people of color and the groups that have been systematically oppressed throughout the entire history of this country.

The fact of the matter is that the ability to participate in the "productive conversations" takes a tremendous amount of privilege. Some are simple privileges such as time and energy, which not everyone has. Others are more complex privileges like skin color and gender. I, a white male, have long



Trump supporters are often labeled as "politically incorrect."

Photo Credit: Jonathan Ernst

benefited from my skin color and gender in this country. I have the ability to get into arguments with others who do not agree with me, but then leave the conversation and not have to worry about walking home safely or being confronted by the police. Not everyone has this privilege.

When we call out overt racism in this country, it can establish social penalties for certain thoughts and actions. Research shows we diminish our implicit biases when we explicitly name them. The goal of an argument does not only have to be to convince your oppo-

nent. Dialogue can also convince onlookers that bigotry will not be accepted.

United States history is filled with fights for civil rights, and many of the most productive movements were influential not because of civility, but by calling things out specifically for what they were.

"PC" has become a term branded as a negative form of speech. But on the other hand, anti-"PC" has just become another name for bigotry and racism. My hope is that one day what is labeled as "politically correct" can just be what is right.

*The ability to participate in "productive conversations" takes a tremendous amount of privilege.*

instances when this labeling is unwarranted. But it is important to realize this standard that the criticism is setting.

The argument behind the criticism that Democrats are quick to label others is that the people labeling others "racists" and "bigots" are the ones who are hurting the dialogue. "Why would I want to talk to you

## Why the Road to Victory Needs to Be Shorter

By  
Freddie Gould  
*Register Forum Contributor*

In April, 2015, *Uptown Funk* was still at the top of the charts. At that same time, the 2016 U.S. presidential race was starting. You were probably ready for it to be over by November, 2015 (a full year before Election Day), if not earlier, but it continued on and on.

Think about it—Hillary Clinton announced her candidacy for president on April 12th, 2015—that's 577 days before Election Day and 295 days before the first primary. We spent a year and a half arguing about Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, and any number of other Republican candidates. That's a year and a half of Facebook posts, email scandals, and tax returns we all had to hear about, seemingly every day.

It isn't this bad everywhere. In Canada, the 2015 election season was only 78 days long. Mexico mandates that a campaign season be only 147 days long, and Japan mandates it be only 12 days long.

Now, whether or not you think 12 days is too short, most of us can agree that upwards of a year and a half is too long. The American public doesn't want or need to be bombarded with campaign ads, election news stories, and infuriating political arguments for over a year. Anyway, many of us made up our mind in the first week of the campaigns and spent the rest of the time vehemently hating the other side.

Perhaps the most outstanding consequence of our outrageously long campaign seasons is the time and money we waste that would be better spent actually running our country productively.

Presidential campaigns take our eyes away from actual reform and point them towards candidates and what they will do a year or more in the future.

These past few months—and years—instead of talking about how we don't have a full Supreme Court right now or debating issues that we can move towards resolving before a new president is even elected, we all blabbered on about what the campaign scandal of the



Hillary Clinton announced her candidacy on April 12th, 2015.

Photo Credit: The Politic

day was. Furthermore, shorter campaign seasons allow Congress and the president to focus on doing their jobs, not trying to get themselves or their party re-elected.

Additionally, long election seasons cost an obscene amount of money. The 2016 presidential candidates raised over two billion dollars combined for their campaigns. You need a fund in the hundreds of millions to even consider a campaign. Want to take the first step towards taking money out of politics? Shorten the campaign season.

All in all, as a country we should add shortening the campaign season to our list of campaign reforms. Following in the footsteps of Japan, Brazil, Mexico, and even the UK, we can forbid political ads before a certain date. Even if we can't stop the inevitable campaign wave, we can make it a little less annoying and intrusive before it needs to be. So please Americans, let's stop making a period that divides and exhausts our country longer and instead make campaign seasons short again.



# There’s No Shortage of Reasons to Love Loving



By  
Cecilia Barron  
Register Forum Editor

It is rare to find a courtroom love story that doesn’t veer too far into the technicalities of law, but also doesn’t fall into romantic clichés. *Loving* strikes the perfect balance between the two. Starring Joel Edgerton and Ruth Negga and directed by Jeff Nichols, *Loving* offers the heartwarming story behind the historic Supreme Court decision of *Loving v. Virginia*, which legally defended interracial marriage.

*Loving* begins by chronicling the relationship between Mildred Loving (Negga), a black woman, and Richard Loving (Edgerton), a white man, in rural Virginia. In 1959, the two officially married in D.C. because interracial marriage wasn’t recognized in the state of Virginia. Upon returning home, they were convicted of violating Virginia’s laws. In a plea deal, they were ordered to leave Virginia and not return together for 25 years.

In 1964, they appealed to the U.S. District Court, and the case eventually reached the Supreme Court. On June 12th, 1967, the Supreme Court overturned the Lovings’ convictions, stating that the denial of interracial marriage violated the 14th Amendment.

While *Loving* follows the court case, the law plays a minor role in the movie. The majority of the film focuses around the quaintness of the Lovings. Both Mildred and Richard came from poor backgrounds, and neither had ever known more than Virginia. Richard’s mom, while a friend of Mildred, believes her son’s life could be easier by marrying a white woman, and Mildred’s parents feel similarly. Richard and Mildred ignore their parents’ wishes and the opposition from the

*Loving sends a clear message that love doesn’t have to be complicated.*

white members of their town without much thought. They turn their backs on racism and prejudice nonchalantly throughout the entire film. The beauty of *Loving* is the way it portrays love. *Loving* proves love can be simple, even with complications. While most of *Loving*



Loving tells the story behind the historic Supreme Court decision *Loving v. Virginia*.  
Photo Credit: Focus Features

does fall into the category of a love story about two ill-fated lovers, torn between opposing sides or wishes, *Loving* sends a clear message that, even still, love doesn’t have to be complicated.

Edgerton and Negga are both perfectly cast. Richard has a rigid exterior that becomes more emotional when provoked, and Edgerton understands that. He plays Richard without understating or overstating the ordinariness of his character. Negga is equally talented in her portrayal of Mildred, playing her as a loving wife and mother without losing Mildred’s personality within that role. Mildred is the more ambitious of the two and brings much more publicity into the Lovings’ household than Richard is pleased with. However,

the relationship that Edgerton and Negga have on screen isn’t overly dramatic. There are no screaming matches or unwarranted hugs. They play the characters with such honesty and reality that the normalness of the couple, even under their abnormal circumstances, shines through.

*Loving* is a film of great importance. It shows the lives behind a court case that changed our country. Many of the arguments used in *Loving v. Virginia* were used as arguments again in *Obergefell v. Hodges* in 2015, the case allowing for same-sex marriage. *Loving* provides brilliant insight into the conventions of love, and the extent to which those conventions have changed in the courtroom. Best of all, the protagonist in *Loving* is not a justice or lawyer, it is the simple love between two Virginians.

# Don’t Wish Upon a Starboy: Weeknd’s Album Disappoints



By  
Shuvom Sadhuka  
Register Forum Contributor

Thanksgiving week-end brought football, turkey, and, most importantly, the release of The Weeknd’s third studio album, *Starboy*. The highly anticipated album achieved strong initial success, peaking atop the Billboard top 25 albums and featuring four of the top 100 songs, but it ultimately failed to meet its high expectations.

Breaking from his traditional dark and ominous themes, The Weeknd chose to use his signature falsetto voice over more upbeat 80’s pop beats.

The results varied; at times, the new experiment sounded like the second coming of Michael Jackson, but for the most part it was a confusing mix of 80’s and modern pop prolonged over 18 unexciting tracks.

The album begins with the hit single, “Starboy,” for

which the album is named. The song is the prototypical Weeknd track, sung with a falsetto voice over a quirky electronic beat using lyrics about newfound wealth and fame, and the song makes its mark as easily one of the best songs of the album, and perhaps of The Weeknd’s career as well.

The Weeknd’s next track, “Party Monster,” is more conservative; he opts for his usual downbeat tones and lyrics.

“False Alarm” begins in the same way but shifts to an upbeat chorus with a heavy drum feature that continues throughout the song. The stark difference between the introduction and the main part of the song seems odd at first and puzzling by the end, especially considering that the first two songs had been so drastically different.

In his fifth track, “Rockin’,” The Weeknd throws another curveball. Starting the song with a fresh alto voice, he then shifts back to his falsetto in the chorus. The transition is smoother and not as drastic



The Weeknd released his new album *Starboy* on November 25th.

as “False Alarm,” but it is safe to assume that it did not achieve the effect he had intended.

He then turns to a slower beat and falsetto voice in “True Colors,” while keeping the happier undertones from the song “Secrets” in a solid but not stunning performance.

If the album had ended after “Secrets,” I would have given it a solid three out of four Falcons. The Weeknd experiments, to varying success, with new sounds and looks, but also does enough to satisfy fans

with more traditional Weeknd songs—but the second part of the album drops the ball.

In what certainly had great potential, the Weeknd fumbles both “Stargirl Interlude” and “Sidewalks” with surprisingly uninspiring features from the talented Lana del Ray and Kendrick Lamar.

*Starboy* eventually stumbles to the finish line with a painfully long set of eight more songs, all but one of which are more than 3:30 minutes in length.

A couple gems do

exist, namely “A Lonely Night” and “Ordinary Night,” which benefit greatly from Michael Jacksonesque beats and singing, but the second half of the album ends up being bland and forgettable.

Above all, the album suffers from a lack of coherence in its story and musical themes. *Starboy* features a handful of songs which will reign atop the charts for a while and plenty more which will please listeners, but the album won’t have the lasting impact many fans had hoped for.



Casey Affleck Delivers Captivating Performance in *Manchester by the Sea*



By  
Grace Ramsdell  
Register Forum Managing  
Editor

*Manchester by the Sea* is one of those movies that stays with you long after you walk out of the theater. Starring Rindge’s own Casey Affleck ‘93 (with an appearance from Jackson Damon ‘15), the slow intensity of the film lingers.

The movie opens with a flashback of the protagonist, Lee (Affleck), out fishing on the North Shore with his young nephew, Patrick, and older brother (Kyle Chandler of *Friday Night Lights*).

Jokingly, Lee argues that if Patrick had to be stuck on an island with only one person, he should choose Lee, not his dad.

Flash forward to the present, and Lee—now an apartment custodian in Quincy—gets a call from the hospital. Hours later, his brother has died.

Lee goes home to Manchester-by-the-Sea, where he learns, much to his surprise, that he is the guardian of a now sixteen-year-old Patrick (Lucas Hedges). Throughout the film, the story oscillates between unannounced flashbacks and scenes of Lee and Patrick pattering through life in Manchester as they grapple with their new circumstances.

The flashbacks allow us to experience the memories that come flooding back to Lee when he reluctantly returns to Manchester. We see him in the past as a loving husband and father, but in the present with Pat-

rick, he is mostly gruff and antisocial—leaving us to wonder what caused such a change.

Lee’s passive, sometimes hostile, demeanor is a mystery at the beginning of the movie, but writer-

director Kenneth Lonergan doesn’t wait long before disclosing the horrific events of Lee’s past. The movie becomes a portrait of how people can become broken, without trying to convince us that they can be fixed just for the sake of a happy ending.

If nothing else, you will walk away from *Manchester by the Sea* without a doubt that Casey is your new favorite of the Affleck brothers. His quiet, reserved portrayal of Lee is a captivating and heartbreakingly human performance.

Hedges as Patrick is compelling in his own right, delivering lines like, “All my friends are here, I’ve got two girlfriends, and I’m in a band. You’re a janitor in Quincy,” with all the vigor of a self-righteous teenager who doesn’t want to move away from home.

The easy chemis-



Manchester by the Sea has a 97% rating on Rotten Tomatoes.  
Photo Credit: Hollywood Reporter

try between Affleck and Hedges allows for some of the best scenes in the film. Back-and-forth between their characters more often than not provides wry humor amid tension and grief. When I watched *Manchester by the Sea* a second time, knowing what was coming made the film all the more painful, but these moments of witty banter and heartwarming awkwardness still brought a smile to my face.

Because *Manchester by the Sea* is so effortlessly authentic, it makes it all the more noticeable when something feels like just a plot device. For the most

part, the film is emotional without being too dramatic, but the magnitude of the tragedy in Lee’s past goes over the top to illustrate how Lee became the man he is. The classical soundtrack, too, is unnecessarily dramatic.

Ultimately, it is not the enormity of the hurdles that Lee and Patrick face that are so striking, but rather the small, human ways that these characters interact. Neither of them changes very much, but we don’t appreciate them any less because of that. They remind us that growth in the wake of despair is not always realistic, and simply going on can be an act of courage.

*The movie becomes a portrait of how people can become broken, without trying to convince us that they can be fixed just for the sake of a happy ending.*



A BLAST FROM THE PAST  
The Register Forum, May 2005



Surprisingly, *Revenge of the Sith* Isn’t Bad

By  
Khudejha Asghar  
Register Forum Staff

After the disappointments of Episodes I and II in the Star Wars prequel trilogy (*The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones*), it is hard to imagine that the last installment will not be equally horrendous. Hard, that is, until one has gone to the theater and seen the film.

The movie opens with a fight scene and the action that Star Wars fans have been dying to see is delivered in *Revenge of the Sith*, the film that ties the first trilogy to the second in the greatest saga to hit theaters worldwide. As in the first trilogy, Lucas mirrors politics in the United States with the situation in a galaxy far, far away, and the message is not a happy one. All know the ending. Anakin falls to the dark side and the idea of going to war to bring peace is reminiscent of America’s War on Terrorism.

While there are a couple of inconsistencies from this last prequel to the original trilogy, *Revenge of the Sith* answers most of fans’ questions, the most major being how Anakin turns to the dark side.



Anakin (Christensen) watches a sea of lava after committing an act of horrific barbarity.

dark side in a manner that leaves the audience feeling bad for him and his options—or lack thereof. As is seen in the previews, the Jedi Council asks Anakin to spy on his master, Palpatine, and the Chancellor (played magnificently by McDiarmid) only fuels the conflict within Anakin.

Most fans will be relieved by the quick emotional scenes between Anakin and Padmé, which are poorly written and lack the passion that should exist between two people in love. Despite her impressive résumé, Natalie Portman is the more wooden of the two and Senator Amidala’s role in the final installment is much smaller than

shines as Jedi Master Kenobi adding both humor and emotion to the entire movie, and this final fight captures the audience (this reviewer was bouncing in her seat at 12:30 in the morning).

Another source of comedy is Anakin’s droic R2D2. Though mostly digitized scenes and characters (including R2 for the action sequences) are almost flawless aesthetically and *Revenge of the Sith* is not just a good Star Wars movie, but also a good film in general. In any case, it is not one to miss.

ROTS grossed over

By  
Christo Hays  
Register Forum Staff

2015 marked a universally praised return to the *Star Wars* franchise. It’s hard to imagine that just over ten years ago everyone was ready to move on from the galaxy far, far, away.

*Revenge of the Sith*, released on May 19th, 2005, saw the end of the critically-despised *Star Wars* prequel trilogy. Though a step up from its predecessors—the film garnered a 79% on Rotten Tomatoes, compared to a meager 55% for *The Phantom Menace*—*Sith* couldn’t reach the critical bar set by the original trilogy.

Yet, amongst a chorus of half-hearted endorsements, in 2005 the *Register Forum* boldly proclaimed the final film in the saga as not just a comparatively good film, but a good film, period.

In a dramatic break from the status quo, the *Register Forum* praised actor Hayden Christensen for his performance as Anakin Skywalker, claiming that he brought life to the tragic fall of Luke Skywalker’s

father. Christensen has been credited by other publications as delivering the worst character performance in the entire franchise this side of Ahmed Best’s Jar Jar Binks.

Other selling points, according to the *Register Forum*, were standout performances by Ewan McGregor as Obi-Wan Kenobi and Ian McDiarmid as soon-to-be Emperor Palpatine, bar-raising action sequences, and the narrative closure *Star Wars* fans had been waiting 30 years for.

This December’s *Rogue One* spinoff film picks up where the prequels left off, revisiting the time period between *Revenge of the Sith* and the original *Star Wars*. While TV shows, books, and other media have explored this time period, the wider movie-going demographic is experiencing this era for the first time. The latest run of *Star Wars* films is off to a good start, and *Rogue One*’s success won’t depend on redeeming what came before it—*Sith* did, but on the other prequel movies—hopefully it can successfully carry the torch onward. Either way, the *RF* will be back soon with its verdict on the state of the *Star Wars* Empire.



# Westworld *Contends with Complex Questions*



By  
Rosa Munson-Blatt  
*Register Forum  
Contributor*

What makes a person truly human? How do we achieve sentience? And can we ever construct technology that feels as humans do? HBO’s newest television show *Westworld* explores the complexities of these and more questions in its riveting first season.

Starring Sir Anthony Hopkins, Evan Rachel Woods, Thandie Newton, and James Marsden, the show is based on the premise of a Wild-West theme park equipped with artificially intelligent humans, that extremely (like, very, *very*) rich patrons can pay 40k a day to fully immerse themselves in. As the show goes on, it becomes increasingly apparent just how confusingly muddled

these artificially intelligent humans are as they begin to experience sentience, the very defining aspect that makes up a human.

While the show has a rich cast and a colorful plot, it is immensely complemented by the authentic western costumes, sets, and even the score, which is founded upon an eerily repetitive piano tune. The special effects are also incredible and frighteningly convincing, as the AI humans have body parts literally dismembered and heads cut into. They effects are run by Jay Worth, the VFX supervisor, who has worked on many projects with *Westworld*’s producer JJ Abrams, including cult classic *Lost* and horror feature *Cloverfield*.

The show has gained a small, but dedicated, following here at Rindge. Students were posed the difficult question of how *Westworld* has changed their view on feelings, particularly when

amalgamated with a technological component.

Senior Josh Kuh explains that “it challenges what you think of as emotions and consciousness, what defines both of those, and how they become real.”

Senior Gem MaHaffey describes how *Westworld* “opens up a conversation on humanity and how much we think we understand ourselves, when in fact we know very little, and it does this through characters that aren’t human.”

She adds, “It’s jarring at first because you become super invested in characters that aren’t humans and have humans as the antagonist, but its a contradiction because we all are humans and want to vote for those that are like us, the humans.”

Similarly, senior Arlo Sims felt conflicted with the show’s manipulation: “*Westworld* makes me think about whether humans are really unique compared to machines. At some points



Westworld’s first season can be watched on HBO.

Photo Credit: Entertainment Tonight

the androids even show more profound emotions than the people, which makes me question whether people’s emotions are really genuine.”

Junior Lily Grob shares her response succinctly, warning that while it may be cheesy it’s important to recognize: “Everything feels. Everything hurts. Everything loves. We must respect that.”

Even *Westworld* actor Marsden grapples with the show’s meaning. On *The Stephen Colbert Show*, Marsden, after some time, finally concluded that “the commentary that [*Westworld*] is presenting is when do we become human, what is it to be human, is there a beginning of conscious, [and] how do you behave when no one is looking from the human perspective.”

## Winter A Cappella Jam



Pictured above: CRLS groups performing at the Winter A Cappella Jam on December 10th (top and bottom right); guest performers from Brookline High School (bottom left).  
Photo Credit: Marina Pineda-Shokooh



# Quirky Holiday Traditions

By  
Atticus Olivet  
Register Forum  
Contributor

With the holidays coming back around, it is the time of year that strange holiday traditions manifest themselves. Almost everyone has some sort of winter tradition, whether they celebrate the holidays or not.

These traditions can be something as simple as sitting with your pet on New Years Day while the world recovers from the night before. Though this might be a simple tradition, more creative holiday traditions are not out of the norm. We usually don't recognize how strange they actually are until we discuss them aloud. There are a number of students and teachers at CRLS that have strange holiday traditions to share.

CRLS junior Lior Shavit describes one holiday tradition in his family as "not really as unique as it is disappointing." Shavit tells that "on Hanukah, [his] parents give [him and

his siblings] matzah instead of cash." When asked how that makes him feel, he said, "sh@#!y." This is a tradition that started at birth for Shavit and his family, and is unlikely to change any time soon. In contrast, most Jewish families give money. But this tradition of matzah instead is an important staple to the Shavit family's year.

CRLS biology teacher Ms. Lecorps also has what some might consider a strange holiday tradition. "We all get together at my parents house in Belmont and we watch *Coming to America* and *Trading Place*. We do this every single Thanksgiving." This is another tradition that is simply accepted: it will happen as it did the year before. The two Eddie Murphy classics are essential to the Lecorps family tradition. They may seem strange to an outsider, but within a family, holiday traditions are a part of the season, unique and deeply imbedded in that family's culture. A final strange holiday tradition comes from

CRLS sophomore, Hanna Carney. Her family's Thanksgiving tradition is one that starts out as many might: "Every year we start the day with the Turkey Trot 5k." But after they finish the race, they go home to have a potato peeling contest with uncle Mike, the most established potato peeler in the family. The intense peeling continues until the early afternoon, when the potatoes are roasted by the loser (as well as the other 19 guests).

Other holiday traditions celebrated by CRLS students include one family's dog picking out their Christmas tree every winter, and one student's uncle presenting the student's grandfather with a new animal print snuggie each year on New Years Day. As exotic as some of these traditions may sound, each of us can think of a tradition that is unlike any other and is central to our family lore. The best traditions are not those that have been imposed upon us; they are the ones we create together as family and friends.

# A Festive Winter Break

By  
Sun-Jung Yum  
Register Forum Editor

*Even though we are only given one week of winter break, that isn't an excuse to stay in during the holidays! This year, especially, Boston has hundreds of events and attractions to pump up your holiday spirit.*



Symphony Hall celebrates the holidays with its iconic Holiday Pops.  
Photo Credit: Mark Prosser

### Go See a Performance

In the area, there are countless musical and theatrical performances available to all. These include the Boston Ballet's famed production of *The Nutcracker*, as well as the Boston Symphony Orchestra's *Holiday Pops*. If you're looking for something more casual, there's no need to fret! Holiday movies are always playing at the Coolidge Corner Theatre, and the Somerville Theater is putting on a show this year called *The Slutcracker*, a parody of none other than Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*. The comedy has sold out every season for the past eight years. And, as usual, *Disney on Ice* at the Agganis Arena is always a good option that'll bring back childhood memories.

### Visit Our Very Own "Winter Wonderland"

This year, the City Hall Plaza has opened a new attraction for Bostonians, "Boston Winter Presented by Berkshire Bank." Here, they have an 11,000 square foot outdoor ice skating path, as well as a European-style holiday shopping market. There have been some complaints that it did not live up to its expectations, but it's worth a visit if you want to buy gifts, admire holiday decorations, or just skate! Open seven days a week, 11 AM to 7 PM, everyone should take advantage of this brand-new "wonderland."

*Read a review of the wonderland to the left.*

### Spend Time in Boston Common

Boston Common is home to hundreds of festivities during this time of year, with a gigantic tree that has been donated by Nova Scotia every year since 1971—their form of gratitude for Boston's helpful response during the 1917 Halifax Explosion. This year, the tree is a 47-foot white spruce laden with lights and ornaments—something that has to be seen by everyone! While you're there, it wouldn't hurt to drop by Frog Pond and skate around the ice rink surrounded by wonderful views. And on your way out, take a walk through the Boston Public Garden, which is always filled with lights and carolers at this time of year.

### Stop by a Free Light and Sound Show

If you want to listen to the *Holiday Pops* and experience the festivities without paying any money, make sure to go to *Blink!*, a free light and sound show at Faneuil Hall. Featuring music from the BSO, as well as holiday trees and local musicians, *Blink!* is something you don't want to miss. These shows are nightly, and run every hour. Who could resist? This is definitely the proper—and free—way to get into the holiday spirit.

### Last but Not Least...

Boston's First Night, the city's celebration of the New Year, has been a critically acclaimed celebration for over 40 years. Attractions include fireworks over Boston Common during the evening, a parade down Boylston Street, ice sculptures and light shows, live musical performances, and of course, the famous midnight firework show at Copley Square. Plus, First Night events have always been completely free of charge! There are no excuses—make sure you ring in your New Year with this event.

# Winter Wonderland Review

by Rosa Munson-Blatt

This year on the plaza in front of the Boston City Hall, the city has erected their iteration of a winter wonderland. It comprises of smalls cottages selling local independent goods, two dining halls, and a skating rink loop. Christmas trees (including one that is lit by the moving pedals of the bicycles connected to it), nutcrackers, and wreaths adorn every inch of the set up. The potential is clearly there, however, it falls short with size, taking up only half of what the plaza offers. Additionally, it all seems too commercialized, which is unsurprising, considering that much of Christmas' charm has become associated with the creating of wish lists and of giving of gifts. Perhaps it was zealous wishful thinking, but the captivating idea of a Christmas wonderland that permeates movies like the *Polar Express* and Buddy's creations in *Elf* are certainly not present in Boston yet.



The Boston winter wonderland is open seven days a week.

Photo Credit: Rosa Munson-Blatt