Fifth Africaribana signals new era for Caribbean Student Network

Caroline Enos
Journal Staff

The Caribbean Student Network (CSN) held its 5th annual Africaribana last Friday night at Sargent Hall. On par with this year’s theme “Switching Lanes,” CSN partnered with other universities for the first time to coordinate the event and move the organization into a new direction.

Students from across Boston danced, mingled and ate traditional Caribbean food throughout the night. CSN members referenced the event’s theme to encourage minimal phone use during the event by students, who were told that just like they should not text and drive, they should not text while socializing.

“Caribbean is a celebration that vividly depicts our hospitality, culture and cuisine through different forms of art and cultural identities,” said CSN President Malik Richard. “Mélange de culture is what we like to call it; a cultural mixture of races and identities uniting a sustainable relationship with these universities not only for CSN, but for Suffolk at large,” said Richard. “Boston is our city, and when CSN thinks about Boston, we think inclusivity, diversity and believing that there is power in numbers.”

CSN Vice President Jolise “Jello” Grant said that some students were surprised by the partnership with Emerson College.

“There’s a rivalry between the two schools that I’d never really heard of, and people would ask me, ‘How did you guys get Emerson to go to this?’ said Grant.

“I just asked,” she told them.

This was also the first year Africaribana was hosted at Sargent Hall. When the event was held at Sargent Hall in previous years, it often sold out before the night’s end and students would have to be turned away at the door.

“For [Africaribana’s 5th anniversary], we also wanted to eradicate the stigma that students were expressing, ‘which was having fun in a space in which we ate.’” said Richard, citing this together as one.”

Emerson’s Black Organization With Natural Interest (EBONI) helped organize this year’s Africaribana, and had planned to collaborate with Suffolk before CSN reached out to them. Northeastern University and Regis College also advertised the event on their own campuses.

“We wanted to build as another reason for needing a larger space. With its 30th anniversary coming up in 2019, CSN continues to educate students on the Caribbean and works to eliminate stigmas surrounding race. Although the organization focuses on Caribbean culture, it is open to students of all backgrounds.

“People always think that CSN is only for black people, but its not,” said Grant. “Our events are attended by people of all cultures and this club opens up many conversations.”

The group is especially dedicated to showcasing diversity among black cultures.

“We’re not just black, we’re African Americans, Caribbean Americans and Latinx Americans,” said Grant. “We are all creative in different ways, but we all try to be a family so that we know there’s someone here to support each other.”

CSN holds events throughout the semester to bring students together and celebrate diversity. In November, it co-hosted the “Thank you for Being You” luncheon alongside other campus organizations, and plans to hold several more events through the end of the school year.

The organization’s annual fashion show is on April 13th at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, and E-board members hope to collaborate with Suffolk’s Program Council and the Student Government Association to organize the first ever Mr. and Miss Suffolk University in March 2019.

“These events are a nice way to get in touch with other students,” said Pam Denello, a sophomore at Suffolk who attended Africaribana and other past CSN events. “It’s nice to see the school represent different cultures.”

To Richard and CSN’s members, these events are vital to showcasing diversity at Suffolk.

“Our culture is so deeply rooted in us that we refuse to let our passion bottle in,” said Richard. “At the end of each semester, we give students a reality of who we really are while making sure everyone feels welcome celebrating with us.”

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The Nutcracker comes to Boston

Clara, played by Hannah Bettes and The Nutcracker Prince, played by Paulo Arrais in Act I of “The Nutcracker”

See NUTCRACKER - 7

77th annual tree lighting signifies the beginning of the holiday season

Nick Viveiros
Journal Staff

Oliveia Acevedo
Journal Contributor

Boston celebrated its biggest annual tree lighting ceremony at the Boston Common last Thursday in a star-studded ceremony that concluded with a fireworks display and the lighting of the city’s most prominent christmas tree.

A tradition going on for 77 years now, it is an extravagant event where families, friends and college students come together in celebration of the winter holiday season. This year yielded a crowd over a thousand, as people from all over New England came to its largest city for one of the largest Christmas tree lightings around.

The event was filled with surprise guest appearances from local and national celebrities. Red Sox President Sam Kennedy took to the stage to show off the team’s 2018 World Series trophy, while pop superstar Andy Grammer and the Morning Star Baptist Choir serenaded the
tens of thousands of spectators.

As the night went on and throngs of spectators buddled around Dunkin Donuts trucks and pop-up shops, all eyes were on the silhouette of the 46-foot Nova Scotian fir tree, located on the eastern edge of the Common. Around 8 o’clock, Mayor Martin J. Walsh took to the stage and put his hand on an oversized switch.

“Ten! Nine! Eight!”

The entire crowd joined in the countdown. Everyone stopped and stared at the titanic tree, anticipating its gleaming display. As soon as the clock struck eight, the entire Common came to life, lit up like a glittering marquee.

The array of colors and lights caused for the jubilant crowd of thousands to cheer and rejoice together in front of the tree. People of all ages came together in the midst of the holiday
An exit strategy from extremism

(From Left) Frankie Meeink, Tony McAleer and Micheal Kimmel gather in The First Parish church in Cambridge, MA

Katelyn Norwood / Journal Staff

A crowd filed into pews on Wednesday at The First Parish Church in Cambridge to hear Stony Brook Professor of sociology Michael Kimmel speak on his new book, "Healing from Hate: Into and Out of Violent Extremism.”

Kimmel brought two former Neo-Nazis, Frankie Meeink and Tony McAleer, to speak on their own experiences with extremism and the contributions they were making to help others leave after exiting themselves. The event had Kimmel speak on his book and the central themes of masculinity, brotherhood and how members can exit extremist groups.

Kimmel’s book hypothesizes that masculinity and gender are pivotal reasons that many young men become involved in extremist groups. Kimmel argues that masculinity is the central role in their personal identity, making the promise that if men join, they will get their manhood back.

"So it seemed to me that there was something missing in our conversation and it was, staring us in the face, and that was masculinity," said Kimmel.

Kimmel believes that masculinity can help establish a space for men to join together in a community of acceptance, creating a visceral and emotional feeling of brotherhood. The acceptance of a hateful ideology comes in later after the sense of validity has been established.

"Gender and masculinity are not the only explanation for why people go into the extreme nationalist movements. But without understanding gender you can’t get the whole picture," said Kimmel in an interview with The Suffolk Journal.

McAleer’s involvement with an extremist group can be traced to when he was nine years old. He said that after he discovered his father’s infidelity and was beaten in school for his slipping grades, he was transferred to a boarding school in England and became involved with a group of skinheads. It was here where Kimmel believes his findings are proven; McAleer felt a sense of security and community with these other men.

It was here where Kimmel believes he found that sense of parental support he had been missing, a community where the other men cared about what he had to say.

Anna Soltani, a sophomore at Suffolk University majoring in international relations, came at the recommendation of her professor and found the event to be eye-opening.

"Hearing their side of the story I never seemed to think 'maybe this is important to think about'," said Meeink. "It is a gut wrenching heartcheck when you have to take all the stuff you were just proud in, and you have to take that away from me.”

Meeink detailed how involvement with neo-nazis in Pennsylvania, McAleer found that sense of parental support he had been missing, a community where the other men cared about what he had to say.

An exit strategy from extremism

"Identity and ideology become intertwined. When you attack the ideology you attack that person’s identity, that’s never going to persuade someone to exit the group," said McAleer.

Both Meeink and McAleer became disillusioned with the extremist groups and exited from them, but the healing process was not an immediate one.

"When I got out of prison I still wanted to be proud in, and you have to take that away from me,” said Meeink. "It is a gut wrenching heartcheck when you have to take all the stuff you were just proud in, and you have to take that away from me.”

Meeink detailed how he disengaged from the movement, citing the births of his daughter and son as the reasons.

Kimmel also brought up the idea of confrontation of the “other” as a means to breaking down stigmas and stereotypes, believing that people have to be put together in order to understand one another.

Both men now work with Life After Hate, an organization formed in 2011 to help people leave hate groups.

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Katelyn Norwood / Journal Staff
On Nov. 27, Suffolk's Modern Theater was packed for a screening and discussion with the director of the 2014 film "Little White Lie." The personal documentary follows American filmmaker Lacey Schwartz as she uncovers her family's hidden secrets and the truth behind her identity. "I actually grew up thinking I was white," said Schwartz in the opening scenes of the film.

The film uses home videos, interviews with family and friends and anecdotes from her own life to tell her story. Her parents, Peggy and Robert Schwartz are white Jews living in Woodstock, New York. They only had one daughter, and when Lacey was born, it was obvious that she was black. For most of her youth, her parents explained that her dark skin came from Sicilian ancestors on her father's side of the family. This rationalization was accepted by Lacey, her father and the rest of her family.

Acknowledging her true identity would mean her mother would have to admit to an extramarital affair with another man. This would also mean that Lacey's biological father was not the man who raised her.

Upon returning home from college, Schwartz confronted her mother about her blackness. She finally admitted to an extramarital affair with an African-American man named Rodney, who was Schwartz's biological father. This revelation gave Schwartz a completely new understanding of her identity and allowed her to embrace her African-American heritage. "Being true to myself meant being both black and white," she said during the film.

Following the screening of the documentary, professor Shoshana Madmoni-Gerber sat down with Schwartz to discuss the creation of the film and to allow audience members to ask questions. One woman spoke about how Schwartz's mother made a comment during the film that the lie only came out because the man she had an affair with was black. This opened up a dialogue about family secrets. "Family secrets are rampant and it's very easy to look at other people's families and think 'oh my god how could they do that' but the reality is a majority of people have these things going on and they're not talking about them," said Schwartz.

She spoke about how her family's story is not unique and how people all across the globe have reached out to her with similar stories. Schwartz hoped that her film would open up a dialogue within society so that people can have these difficult discussions in a healthy way. "This happens all over the place," said Schwartz. "Fundamentally my mother is irrelevant, and I'm irrelevant. Really it's about how these family secrets are operating within our society and deep down affecting the health of our societies and our communities and our families."

The movie advertisement used by Ford Hall Forum for "Little White Lie"

The movie advertisement used by Ford Hall Forum for "Little White Lie"
Boston continues long-held winter tradition with tree lighting

From TREE - 1

season, celebrating the park's splendor with admiration and delight.

Suffolk students were not in short supply at the tree lighting. The University owns two properties directly adjacent to the Common, Sargent Scout Hall, which houses the law school, and Smith Hall, which many undergrads call home.

Suffolk junior Michaela Fawcett told the Journal that the event is one of her favorite traditions.

“I've come in years past and I just really love it. It really gets me in the holiday spirit.” Fawcett, a PR and advertising major and Resident Assistant at 1047 Commonwealth, pointed to Suffolk's location as the main reason she's able to enjoy the festivities. “I love living in the city, that's honestly the reason why I chose Suffolk. I'm in the center of it all.”

Sophomore Ireland McGreavy, an interior design major, said that she came out to celebrate the holiday and get in the spirit. "It's super cool, and really rewarding to live in the middle of the city," McGreavy said. “There are people who travel to come and do this and we can literally walk two minutes.”

“I like the holiday season and wanted to enjoy it. I actually had the option to go to the Bruins game but I picked this,’” she told The Journal.

Haley Michaela, a global and cultural communications major who is also a sophomore, said that the tree lighting was "something fun to do" to ring in the Christmas season.

“I've been to colleges that have campuses, and I prefer being right in the city, for sure,” said sophomore Karatina Aguilar.

The history of the Boston Common Christmas tree is rooted in tragedy. After the explosion of a munitions ship in Halifax, Nova Scotia on Dec. 6, 1917 killed 2,000 people, the city of Boston extended to help a neighboring city.

As a token of their appreciation, the Nova Scotian government has donated a tree to the city for over three quarters of a century. “Every year it’s bigger and better," said deputy Nova Scotian premier Karen Casey as she stood next to Mayor Walsh before the lighting.

Many people that attend the tree lighting event are new to the experience and typically aren't entirely sure what to expect. Whether young or old, this event is a great addition to anyone who enjoys the season or for those simply looking for something to do in the city.

The Common tree lighting wasn't the only chance for spectators to watch high-profile officials ring in the holiday season. Governor Charlie Baker was on hand at Faneuil Hall last week to flip the switch on its Christmas tree, while Macy's at Downtown Crossing unveiled its famed window displays the day after Thanksgiving.

Mechanical issues plague MBTA as winter approaches

The MBTA is slowly returning to normal service after a week of delays, breakdowns and accidents as the cold weather tests the system's resilience.

Last week, the Fitchburg Line of the Commuter Rail was backed up for hours after a train lost a wheel in Waltham, according to NECN. The news outlet also reported on a fire on the Kingston Line near Hanson, which forced commuters to evacuate just two days later.

In the city, the T, didn't fare much better. Chronic issues with signals near Orient Heights on the Blue Line delayed train service. On Tuesday, The Boston Globe reported that a disabled Red Line train near South Station caused commuters hours-long headaches until a second train was called in to push the first to the nearest station. That same day, the Haverhill Line was delayed after a train hit a car on the tracks, according to The Globe. More delays are also expected on the Green Line as buses are phased in on the Riverside Branch for track work over the next two years, per the MBTA's website. On-time performance for the T's bus system for Dec. 3 shows that just 68 percent of buses arrived at stops on time, while data from the past year shows that number consistently falls below 75 percent.

Republican majorities make changes as Democrats take over

Republican legislatures in two battleground states are working to limit the power of soon-to-be Democratic-held governorships, fundamentally altering the way the offices work. According to The New York Times, Republican legislators in Wisconsin are attempting to limit the power of the governorship as Scott Walker (R) prepares to be succeeded by Tony Evers (D). “We’re not going backwards in time to revote this election,” Evers told The Times. “I won.”

In Michigan, legislators are pondering moves to restrict incoming Governor Gretchen Whitmer's (D) power to oversee the budget and, according to The Atlantic, moving to shift campaign finance authority away from the Attorney General, a position soon to be held by a Democrat. “Legislative Republicans are new trying to thwart the will of the voters with bills that ignore their voices, [defy] history and will make Michigan a national punchline by effectively ending enforcement of the campaign finance laws they are required to abide by,” Liz Boyd, incoming Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson’s (D) transition team director told The Detroit News. In 2016, after Democrats captured the governorship in North Carolina, Republican legislators moved to limit the power of the governor. “What we’re dealing with is a political disaster. Let’s deal with the reality: It’s a power grab,” said Dan Blue, the Democratic leader in the state senate at the time.
Associate Professor of Journalism and author Shoshana Madmoni-Gerber had no plans of ever being a reporter or writer when she first stepped foot on a university campus. After having served two years in the Israeli army, she earned a bachelor’s degree in sociology and spent time away from her home of Israel traveling to both the United States and Europe.

“How I got into journalism is a story I love to share with my students,” she explained that Israeli women must serve for two years and must serve three. “Many Israelis travel abroad when they finish military service because the army is such a profound experience,” said Madmoni-Gerber. “I didn’t go to combat but for many men that do didn’t know what to do with themselves.”

She worked as a server at a restaurant before getting fired and finding a job at a national newspaper that focused on consumerism and labor relations. It was then that she realized she needed to articulate it at the time, it just seemed unfair,” said Madmoni-Gerber.

Her editor challenged her to write a story about herself and helped her through doing research and setting up interviews as she began to write the story.

“I saw reporting in a very romantic way, I thought I could change the world,”
—Associate Professor of Journalism Shoshana Madmoni-Gerber.

“I told my editor I cannot write the story I am not a reporter,” said Madmoni-Gerber. “He looked at me and told me ‘I can sense it in you; you can become one.’”

The story made the front page of the paper and had been picked up by the radio and other news outlets. She decided to write nonstop for a year before registering for her masters in journalism at Hebrew University. She was able to get a job right away in Jerusalem because of the experience she had gained at her first paper.

“When I graduated I got my first job at a national paper and worked there for a year and half in a section doing stories that were under the radar at other papers,” said Madmoni-Gerber. “We were a group of writers that were committed to writing about inequality and poverty doing stories that were deemed ‘unsexy.’”

She points to having reported on labor relations. It was “a profound experience,” said Madmoni-Gerber. “As a reporter I cannot write the story I hear from employers because it requires students to get an offer from at least one prospective employer. But for many junior and senior year in addition to attending classes.

In the first week of class, I was shocked by how students were willing to ask questions and how comfortable they felt sharing their opinions or thoughts during class. I am not yet used to this change. I often feel like my insecurity of being judged sometimes gets in my way and prevents me from performing as well as others.

One other major difference I noticed was that here in the United States, students work as interns while they are still in college, which does not usually happen in Japan. Instead of internships, we have a different requirement for finding jobs that we call “shukatsu,” which means job hunting.

Shukatsu culture is also prevalent in the U.S.

More than 8,000 students from inside and outside the U.S. came to the three-day event to visit exhibition booths and apply for the more than 200 Japanese companies that participated in the event. As a Japanese who is studying abroad in Boston, I attended the event on the first day. All the attendees were wearing black suits and carrying black bags filled with numerous copies of their resumes that they had prepared beforehand. Booths were filled with students eagerly listening to the workers talk about what it is like to work for them and how the selection process works.

When the 2019 spring semester ends, I will be one of those students looking for a job offer.

The sense of conformity and competition at this event reminded me of stories I heard from many Japanese students I met.

The intense atmosphere among students makes me insecure. This culture is stressful, however, this path is inevitable for me as a Japanese college student. Although I am a little nervous about my future, standing at this crossroad in my life makes me feel more independent and confident than ever before. Keeping that in my mind, I plan to make the most of the time I have at Suffolk.

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DECEMBER 5, 2018 | PAGE 5
GLOBAL COMMENTARY

Time for U.S. to take the global stage with Russia

On Sunday, November 25th, three Ukrainian ships were fired upon and rammed by Russian forces, resulting in six sailors being injured. The entire crew was detained and their boats were seized, according to NBC. This occurred at the beginning of the Kerch Strait, a passage of water separating the Russian-occupied Crimean Peninsula from mainland Russia. The Russians even signed a treaty in 2003 that allowed both access to the area. The week prior ships could enter without issue. However, this time the Russians were waiting for Ukrainians to access the strait, a large oil tanker was seen beneath the Russian-made bridge, effectively blocking any ships from entering. Moscow claims they blocked all shipping from the strait as they had world leaders. Trump refuses to act on Saudi Arabia’s illegal murder and attempted cover-up of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, citing he believes their Deputy Prime Minister, Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman’s story instead of the CIA report.

Whether or not the Russians meddled in the 2016 election is up for debate, but they certainly are benefiting from the result just one week after herself and died as a result of the Kerch Strait incident. Putin has allowed some Ukrainian ships to pass through the strait as of December 4th and their boats were detained for weeks prior ships could enter without issue. The Kerch Strait gives access to the area. The Russian troops in Ukraine.

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Over the last few years, the Russian government has committed acts of war and violence that have not occurred since the late 1930s. Though the Russian government is in our daily news, its behavior has been largely excused and even overlooked by the majority of the international community. Events like the attempted assassination of former Russian Intelligence officer, Sergei Skripal, the illegal annexation of Crimea and the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 have been brought up in the United States media, however, these short-lived stories have been drowned out by U.S. national matters.

Since 2014, Russia has been the aggressor in a fairly overt proxy war with neighboring Ukraine. The Russians annexed Crimea after Russian separatists in the Ukraine took up arms and sought refuge under the Russian flag, according to The Washington Post. The Russians intervened and assisted the separatists in achieving victory with minimal resistance from Ukraine’s allies.

Russia has since fortified the peninsula, adding thousands of soldiers, with no thought of returning the illegally obtained territory, according to newsweek.com. Ever since this incident Eastern Ukraine has been hotly contested. In March of 2018, former Russian Intelligence officer, Sergei Skripal was poisoned by a highly-lethal nerve agent, known as “Novichok.” Skripal, a former spy for the USSR, was living in Salisbury, England at the time, when two Russian nationals were able to contaminate his front door at his home with the toxin, according to BBC News.

Skripal survived, but he and many others were treated extensively for their exposure. An innocent bystander who found the dropped bottle of Novichok, which the assassins had disguised as a perfume bottle, sprayed herself and died as a result just one week after the incident occurred with Skripal. This is also worrisome because it is the first time Russian ships have blocked Ukrainian boats from entering the Sea of Azov. The two nations received terrorist threats to blow up the bridge. It is unclear what Putin’s next move is, but the world should not be surprised if there is a massive land invasion of Russian troops in Ukraine. All the pieces are there, troops are mobilized, tensions are high, and most of the world is ignoring or avoiding this issue.

President Donald Trump’s response has been minimal, his relationship with Putin is strange at best, as is the case with many other countries. Trump’s constant barrage in the media has distracted many from seeing issues taking place on the global stage and they are now beginning to ramp up. Trump intends to put America first, but this isolation mentality has allowed other countries to commit atrocities virtually unchecked. His estranged relationship with NATO can be repaired, the other 28 members of the alliance share a similar opinion on this matter. If Trump and NATO do backup Ukraine, it would be symbolically putting a foot down. This kind of aggressive and malignant behavior is utterly unacceptable in today’s age.

Furthermore, the U.S. and other nations in NATO sacrificed a lot while fighting the tyranny and aggression of the USSR, for nearly five decades in the Cold War. To fall back on the monumental progress so many before us would be detrimental to U.S. legacy and success.

The next few weeks are important. Trump has already canceled a meeting with Putin as a result of the Kerch Strait incident. Putin has allowed some Ukrainian ships to pass through the strait as of December 4th and their boats were detained for weeks prior ships could enter without issue. The Kerch Strait gives access to the area. The Russian troops in Ukraine.

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In its eighth year of production at the Boston Opera House, the historic ‘The Nutcracker’ takes center stage and is scheduled to run through December.

For over 100 years, “The Nutcracker” has earned its place as a Christmas favorite, often symbolizing the beginning of the holiday season. This year was no different, as the classic ballet made its way to the Boston Opera House for opening night on Nov. 29.

The ballerina’s pink, flowy dresses, the sugar plum fairy’s eye-catching sparkle and large fuzzy animals also made for a fantastic costume design. The rats and bears resembled what the costumes looked like in the 1890’s when the ballet originally premiered, adding a bit of eeriness to what is usually, and still was, a beautiful costume design.

One of the more unique features of Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen’s “Nutcracker” are the comedic choices he has made to the classic ballet. Whether it was the Rat Army striking ridiculous poses as the clock struck midnight, the fluffy Teddy Bear’s dramatic leaps or the Gingerbread man allowing the Rats to eat him, the audience was both amazed and amused by the dancers.

A notable scene from Act I took place at the holiday party, when the Harlequin Doll and ballerina were opened from their boxes to entertain the children and party guests. The Harlequin doll smoothly jumped through the air and the ballerina was effortlessly able to balance on her toes, dancing en pointe. Their stiff movements, unlike the normal grace and flow of a ballerina, made the dancers give a very convincing performance of being made of porcelain and ceramics.

The second act kept the comedy to a minimum, allowing the technical skills of the Ballet’s soloists and Principal Dancers to shine. For example, the exquisite dance between the Snow King and Queen was romantic enough to satisfy anyone’s childhood dreams of princesses and fairy tale lands. The fake snow falling on the stage perfectly set the scene for a magical winter wonderland, making the audience feel as if they are in a storybook.

After each dance in Act II, the dancers were met with thunderous applause, well deserved after completing pieces that left the audience cheering with delight and clapping in awe.

One of the principal dancers who stood out the most was the toymaker, portrayed by Matthew Slattery, who glided through every move while never breaking character. He humored the audience in the beginning with the creation of the nutcracker and he lovingly cradled Clara, the young girl who the nutcracker was given to, in his arms whenever the toy broke or she was visibly crying.

Classic scenes like the growing of Clara’s Christmas tree and Mother Ginger’s dress were perfectly executed, delighting the audience both young and old with their seemingly magical transformations.

Although the choreography was spectacular, there were some moments where not all of the dancers were in sync. This could have been the result of opening night jitters or a new cast performing together for the first time, but nevertheless it was still noticeable to the audience.

This performance, the Ballet had two casting changes. For the Chinese dance, Isaac Akiba took the place of Irlan Silva as the lead male dancer. Even more nerve wracking was the casting change for Clara, who was played by Mia Steedle in place of Hannah Bettes.

However, neither of these casting changes impacted the show, as both dancers seamlessly transitioned into their roles without a hint of nervousness or doubt.

After each scene, the breathtaking set opened up into itself, expanding deeper and deeper towards the back of the stage. Although the set was not painted with intricate details or designs, it still gave the appearance of a high-end mansion or elegant palace.

The orchestra beautifully played Tchaikovsky’s composition, filling the theatre with iconic songs such as “The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy.” The instruments were powerful, but unexpectedly, the music was soft enough for the audience to hear the dancer’s feet land on the stage after each grand jeté and pirouette.

The Boston Ballet will continue their run of “The Nutcracker” through Dec. 30.
Suffolk University Dance Company debuts new routines at “Sweet Peek”

Morgan Hume
Asst. Arts Editor

The Suffolk University Dance Company (SUDC) exemplified fresh choreography and confident dancers at Sargent Hall Wednesday night during their “Sweet Peek” performance, which gave the audience an inside look at some of the moves they will be performing at their Spring Showcase.

SUDC performed six brand new dances, each choreographed by a different member of the team. They kicked off the night with Jax Jones’ song “Instruction,” which the group also performed earlier this fall at Suffolk University President Marisa Kelly’s inauguration. It was an unexpectedly upbeat track for a contemporary dance group, but their high-spirited energy made for a fun beginning to the show.

By the middle of the show, the Company slowed down the tempo and eased into their contemporary dances. The posed performers gracefully glided through the slower, ballet style choreography each song featured.

The choreographers deserve praise for their routines as the group is young. Sophomores Emily Ho, Julia Baker and Adrienne Downey debuted their first ever personally-choreographed routines for the Company, displaying the promising potential of the group’s youth.

Each routine put on by the Company succeeded in incorporating creative moves that beautifully brought out the message of the song that accompanied them. For example, every dancer looked radiant and fierce in SUDC’s Secretary and sophomore international relations major Baker’s rendition of Ariana Grande’s “God Is a Woman.” The alluring moves brought out the song’s lyrics about women empowerment. The Company saved the two best pieces for last as the performance ended on an emotional note, because both songs were worthy of tears. Although the songs were soft, the choreography spoke loudly.

SUDC co-captain Sarah Kunnenmann packed her chemistry and of the small group of dancers have with each other. The ending pose with a line of dancers holding hands was successful in showing that every broken heart will be all right.

It was evident that Production Coordinator and pre-law major Adrienne Downey also put a great amount of thought into her routine for the song “Can’t Let Go” by Adele. The dancers drifted through Ho’s routine for “Breathe Me” by Sia, the dancers concluded by leaning on each other, then inhaling and exhaling at once. Their sigh in unison, as well as great partner work throughout the piece, enforced the song’s theme of friends bringing each other up when they are down.

Although the routines were serious and commanding, facial expressions are an important component in conveying emotion in everyday life, and the faces did not agree with the emotions the music and routine conveyed. For the songs that were more powerful or heartbreaking, it would have made for a stronger performance if each dancer had that reflected in their face, especially since they were performing to the audience in the table-filled Sargent Hall function room.

In addition to the performance from SUDC, student dance groups of Velvet and Passion Latina gave guest performances to keep the energy going strong. Velvet’s fast-paced hip-hop moves to a work-out themed mashup of songs earned cheers from the audience. Passion Latina brought a more formal Latin style function room.

SUDC’s Spring Showcase will be held at the Calderwood Pavilion on March 5 and 6. In addition to the Calderwood, SUDC will also be performing at Performing Arts Office events and the Modern Theatre on Dec. 5 and at the Boston College. For more information, visit their Facebook page.

Director Richard Fitts Jr. brings father’s legacy to the big screen in new documentary “21 Years - A Folded Flag”

SARAH LUROWSKI/JOURNAL STAFF

Director Richard Fitts Jr. and producer Rudy Childs visited the AMC Loews Boston Common on Wednesday to screen and discuss “21 Years - A Folded Flag,” a heartwarming documentary that focuses on Fitts’ father’s journey and untimely death in the Vietnam War.

The 86-minute documentary describes the life and death of Richard A. Fitts, whose remains were discovered 21 years after his death and returned to his hometown of Abington, MA for a welcome home. The Boston Globe’s Knife and following the screening. This was Fitts Jr.’s first time directing, so he recruited the experienced Childs, who has worked on other documentaries and music videos to help him along.

“It was very touch-and-go, but I had to reach out to somebody like Rudy,” Fitts Jr. said during the discussion. “I had to find somebody that was willing to be patient and really guide me.”

The documentary included interviews with war heroes, battle reenactments and Fitts Jr.’s story as he tried to make sense of his father’s death during his youth. The screening invoked a round of applause and strong emotion from the audience filled with veterans. It’s a story that will resonate with anyone who has tried to understand their father or even themselves.

Originally, Fitts Jr. hadn’t planned to write, and eventually direct, a documentary about his father, but friends and family encouraged him to share his father’s story. Fitts Jr. was inexperienced in filmmaking and as a musician he didn’t understand military terms, which was something he had to learn as he went.

“Everybody has been telling me that I had a good story for years,” Fitts Jr. said. “There was a lot of it that I felt like I wasn’t ready to do out of respect and I had to learn it all.”

Fitts, who was killed in action after conducting several reconnaissance missions in Laos, sent home his Green Beret and a voice recording six months before his death. However, the government would not admit any knowledge of his death, deeming him Missing in Action in 1964.

Fitts served as a Demolition Specialist in the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group. This was a highly classified special operations unit that conducted covert warfare prior to and during the Vietnam War. According to the documentary, of the millions of Americans that served in the Vietnam War, about 2,000 served in the MACV-SOG unit and of that 400-600 ran the recon missions, which Fitts was a part of.

The documentary took Fitts Jr. two to three years to produce. Fitts Jr. and Childs met at least once a week while working their full-time jobs.

“There were days that we spent 14 hours on it and we just went until the wee hours of the morning,” Childs said.

Fitts Jr. and Childs also received help from many family friends. On the soundtrack, Fitts Jr. used a song from his dad’s former teammate and he recruited help to edit the original voice recording of his father to include in the final film.

“That was full circle moment for me,” Fitts Jr. said.

As Fitts Jr. was interviewing those also a part of MAC-V SOG and other veterans, he was learning about his father as he went. But finding these men to talk to was hard as many went off the grid after the war.

Of those that were interviewed, it was hard for them to open up about the war and their special operations.

“It took a while to understand how to talk to them,” Fitts Jr. said. “I wanted to do it respectfully.”

The 50th anniversary of Fitts’ death, which was on Nov. 30, is a milestone to Fitts Jr. and an appropriate time to show the documentary to the public. The documentary was first debuted at the MACV-SOG reunion in October.

“It’s emotionally huge and it’s also cathartic,” Fitts Jr. said.

“21 Years - A Folded Flag” is currently making its rounds at film festivals such as the Ocean City Film Fest.
The Holidays are here. Take care of yourself

Shayla Manning, Journal Staff

The holidays are anticipated so eagerly that it seems they come earlier each year. What should be a time spent celebrating the love from friends and family around us, often gets lost in the increased anxiety and stress that comes along with it.

It’s important to remember that while the holidays can be a very emotional and depressive time for many people, that doesn’t mean a rise in suicide. The media often portrays a fake, wintertime suicide “epidemic,” but according to The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), November and December are actually the months with the fewest suicides. That’s not to say seasonal affective disorder isn’t present in the lives of many individuals, but deconstructing the myth that suicide peaks during the winter is important in helping those feeling low at this time of year.

For those who already suffer from depression or anxiety, the stress of holiday obligations can only exacerbate those emotions. Feeling forced to attend social gatherings, seeing long-distance relatives or friends or revisiting a memory that occurred during the holidays can carry a lot of emotional weight. It’s important to realize that while many of us feel joy and excitement during this time of year, the overwhelming nature of the holidays can be really hurting those around us.

According to the CDC, 50 percent of media articles written during the 2009–2010 holiday season perpetuated the myth that suicide spikes during the winter months. This myth could potentially hinder those who need help from reaching out, or prevention efforts. The media perpetuating this idea that the holidays are a depressive time, may even contribute to those feeling that way. At a time when stress is at an all-time high, acknowledging that this time of year is difficult may make it easier to handle. There are ways to address the anxiety that comes with this season, but assuming it is actually causing people to harm themselves is a gross misrepresentation we have to debunk.

So, if you are feeling the pressure of the holidays taking a toll on your emotions and well-being, what can you do to help alleviate it? According to Rosalind Dorlen, a private practice clinical psychologist in Summit, New Jersey, trumping the holiday blues comes with letting go of unrealistic expectations that come along with this time of year.

It’s often hard to stop and regroup at a time when stress is at its peak. Between end of the semester deadlines, feeling the immense pressure to go out of your budget to buy material objects for loved ones, time management and just the overall sense of rush of the holidays, it’s important to step back and remember to be realistic. The holidays don’t have to be perfect, especially as your family and friends grow and traditions change. By accepting the adaptations that come along each year, you’ll be more likely to enjoy the season.

Acknowledging your feelings is a big way to reduce the many conflicting emotions you could be feeling during the holidays. Forcing yourself to be happy just because others think you should be during this time of year will only make it more difficult. If you’re feeling isolated or lonely, remember that it’s an extremely busy time of year for everyone. Reaching out to family and friends can help remind everyone what this season should truly be about.

At a time when it feels that you have to express your love and gratitude for someone through putting yourself in debt, remember that you are not obligated to make someone happy through material objects. Shifting your focus to appreciating those around you through quality time and making memories is a far less stressful way to celebrate the holidays, without leaving your bank account struggling for months to come.

As easy as it may be to fall into the idea that the holidays have to be a certain way, recognizing that everyone experiences it differently is key to actually enjoying this time of year. If you love the holiday season and feel little stress, that’s great. But, for those who often fall into a depressive state during these few months, remember that it’s okay to feel that way. The anticipation of the holidays can leave us exhausted, but remembering what really matters this time of year and celebrating that will make it that much easier.

There is not a war on Christmas

Nick Viveiros
Journal Staff

Much has been made of the so-called secular (see: liberal) ‘War on Christmas,’ an extension of the culture war that allegedly aims to destroy one of Christianity’s preeminent winter religious value. The preeminent winter religious value. Made by secularists to combat the concerted effort being made by religious figures such as Jesus Christ, according to Pew Research Center. Yet despite all of this, conservative pundits, especially, bloviate on old tropes about the ‘War on Christmas,’ yet another manufactured controversy of the last century or so. The roots of the ‘War on Christmas’ are actually deeply anti-Semitic.

‘Last Christmas most people had a hard time finding Christmas cards that indicated in any way that Christmas was born to a virgin, 75 percent believe Jesus Christ was born to a virgin, 75 percent believe angels announced His birth.’

Yet despite all of this, conservative pundits, especially, bloviate on old tropes about the ‘War on Christmas,’ yet another manufactured controversy of the last century or so. The roots of the ‘War on Christmas’ are actually deeply anti-Semitic.

See WAR - 10

The Suffolk Journal: We are looking to add talented individuals to our team to manage our social media and back-of-house information and contacts. You would be joining a dedicated team and you can add it to your resume! Email us at suffolkjournal@gmail.com or visit our website thesuffolkjournal.com
Editor’s Word

Finals season is quickly approaching, and the holiday season is following closely behind.

While many of us have the privilege of being able to celebrate the season with friends and family, it is important to remember those of us who are not so fortunate.

Boston is our campus, and the city that many of us call home. As the temperatures drop and many prepare to return home for the holidays, we must think of those who will struggle with homelessness. Whenever possible, we must push ourselves to give back to our community.

Whether it be through volunteering at a food bank, donating gently used clothing and toys to a shelter or giving your time to a local charity, this is the season of giving.

Donations to Suffolk’s CARES pantry can be brought to boxes located in residence halls. Donation boxes for the Toys for Tots drive are located around campus including the Sawyer Lobby.

The Suffolk Journal wishes all a safe and happy winter break, and we’ll see you in the spring.

~ The Suffolk Journal Staff

Politics find their way into the holidays

From WAR - 9

c o m m e m o r a t e d
Someone's Birth,” said The International Jew: The Foremost Problem, a pamphlet published by Henry Ford’s company during the 1920s. “Ten Jewish students can abolish the mention of Christmas and Easter out of schools containing 3,000 Christian pupils.”

Fast forward to the world of Fox News, and such attacks continue. In a 2004 segment on his smash-hit primetime slot The O’Reilly Factor, Fox host Bill O’Reilly lambasted leftist attacks on Christmas. “All over the country, Christmas is taking flak. In Denver this past weekend, no religious floats were permitted in the holiday parade there. In New York City, Mayor Bloomberg unveiled a ‘progressive vision’ of equal access to women’s healthcare, education, voting rights, well-funded public transit and other modern ideals. If the secularists can destroy religion in the public arena, the brave new progressive world is a possibility. That’s what happened in Canada.”

No one is trying to strip the ‘Christ’ out of Christmas, but in the age of secularism, the holiday’s taken on two definitions. Forty-eight percent of Americans say they celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday, down from 51 percent in 2013, said Pew Research Center. That being said, according to Gallup, more than eight in 10 Americans believe in some form of Christianity. This creates a sort of tale of three Christmases, one which emphasizes the birth of God incarnate to a virgin in a manger in the desert, the other which emphasizes holiday cheer and one which incorporates aspects of both.

In short, there is no ‘War on Christmas.’ It is a figment of the cultural right’s imagination, a ruse meant to demonize secularists and cling to hope that they can notch a win for their hopeless side of the Culture War. The holiday is alive and well in America. This year, your correspondent, like many other secularists, will be saying ‘Merry Christmas.’ Nothing has changed, and for the foreseeable future, nothing will.

Connect with Nick by emailing nviveiros@su.suffolk.edu

Sustainable Shopping: Help the planet and your pocket

Harper Wayne
Journal Staff

As the holiday season approaches, everyone is buying gifts last minute with expedited shipping and at the most reasonable prices for their bank account. What everyone is not doing is thinking about how they can shop sustainable, instead of quick and easy. And with all good intentions, the thought process of being a sustainable person is not one that comes with ease and especially not as a college student.

In the midst of finals, getting tickets home, and just trying to not catch the flu, there is more than enough on everyone’s plate coming into winter break. But as the topic of climate change keeps being brought up and our waste keeps compounding, the holidays are just one time out of many during the year when the world is often more wasteful than we think.

One way this can be fixed or at least made a little bit more sustainable is with how the world shops.

Sustainable shopping can be done at stores that either produce smaller batches of clothes, buying fabric that is natural or deadstock fabric or clothing made to be biodegradable or made out of other items like used water bottles. Sustainable shopping can also mean buying in stores instead of shipping everything in separate boxes to your home. This will lead to less cardboard and less fuel used to transport your items.

Sustainable shopping can also mean buying in store instead of shipping everything in separate boxes to your home. This will lead to less cardboard and less fuel used to transport your items. No matter what though, the simple recognition of knowing that behind your gifts of clothes or other items there is energy and waste connected to them will help anyone establish a more conscious mind about their shopping.

Humans often either live in excess or have very little, there has yet to be a happy medium where we take the same amount out of the environment that can be replaced each year. The holidays are often the time that involves gift giving, which can be stressful both to find the perfect gift as well as one that will not break your bank account. This can mean either buying in excess or buying at places that produce in bulk so the consumer pays less. Another option, at least for clothes, sometimes accessories, or furniture and knick knacks is thrifting. Thrifting can be lower end, where one can shop for something original and very unique while not spending too much or at a store like Covet in Boston where they resell the current population to try at least in one way to bring forth a more sustainable life.

The gifts we give can be the small step into a more sustainable life or donating our old gifts to thrift stores and shelters can be it. Overall, being more conscious of the footprint we leave behind can lead to a world less littered with our remnants.

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Fireman inspires student athlete success

Gary Fireman, Suffolk’s Faculty Athletic Representative took on his role in 2004.

Olivia Acevedo
Journal Contributor

Suffolk University has a wide array of faculty that support the Suffolk community and student body. Professors, staff and others are willing to do whatever they can to help students push themselves and ultimately reach their future goals.

Gary Fireman, head of the Psychology Department, helps students in more ways than one. He also represents the student athletes at Suffolk with his role as the Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR). Fireman has been a part of the Suffolk community since 2004 and continues to be a vital asset to the system today.

Fireman is also a professor and specializes in child/adolescent treatment, social competence and developmental psychopathology as part of his job as Psychology Department head.

“I was able to find myself through the element of helping others. I’ve always loved to do it,” said Fireman.

As the FAR, one of Fireman’s roles is to promote the athletics department. Fireman works to make sure not only student athletes are meeting their goals, but all students. It is his hope that he can make every effort to enrich the learning experience of all Suffolk students while raising the Suffolk profile nationally.

“I want to continue to mentor and teach students and produce scholarship,” said Fireman.

Fireman knows his job comes with various demands. The most important is being able to maintain student success consistently here while also furthering the department to be more efficient, helpful and beneficial to student athletes and others.

As a representative of the athletics department, Fireman advertises the program as one that cares about the prosperity of student athletes.

However, before this, Fireman worked at Texas Tech University. He being around students.”

Though the Northeast and Southwest are moderately different, Fireman was very happy with his time in Texas and loved the experience. He was able to interact with people outside my bubble and it really helped me to grow,” said Fireman. “It was a different climate and I’m glad I got exposure to that.”

Fireman was mostly involved with the football team and even had the chance to guest coach a game in 1998. He may have had a range of different opportunities throughout his years at both institutions, but he is grateful for them all.

Being a part of the Suffolk community has been a very fulfilling and rewarding experience for Fireman. He’s been able to accomplish many feats and has enjoyed his job in the athletic department and the community as a whole.

“It liked the Suffolk mission and what it meant; helping others, civic mindedness and experiential learning,” said Fireman. “It’s my goal to continue to support and incorporate student success while integrating athletics and academics.”

Aside from helping student athletes with any necessary means such as stress, support or motivation he has also helped enrich the athletic department by making it more notable and recognized throughout the campus. His time here has been committed to success and he hopes to further advance the athletic department and the learning community altogether.

“I was able to find myself through the element of helping others. I’ve always loved to do it,” said Fireman. “It’s my goal to continue to support and incorporate student success while integrating athletics and academics.”

-Gary Fireman

This Suffolk Ram has been committed to the success of our student athletes and academics. Fireman has been a great asset to the Suffolk University community and has enjoyed his job in the athletic department and the community as a whole.

Connect with Olivia by emailing oacevedo@s.suffolk.edu

Sports Corner

Suffolk Rams Schedule:

Thursday, Dec. 6

- 7:00 p.m. Women’s Basketball vs. Fitchburg St.
- 8:00 p.m. Men’s Basketball at Lesley

Friday, Dec. 7

- 7:00 p.m. Men’s Ice Hockey vs Hobart
- 7:00 p.m. Women’s Ice Hockey at Norwich

Saturday, Dec. 8

- All day - Women’s Indoor Track & Field: Howlin’ Husky Invitational @ Reggie Lewis Center in Roxbury, Mass.
- 11:00 a.m. Men’s Indoor Track & Field: RIC Invitational @ Providence Career & Technical Academy - Providence, R.I.
- 11:00 a.m. Women’s Indoor Track & Field: RIC Invitational @ Providence Career & Technical Academy - Providence, R.I.
- 1:00 p.m. Women’s Basketball vs Framingham St.
- 2:00 p.m. Women’s Ice Hockey at Castleton
- 7:00 p.m. Men’s Ice Hockey vs Skidmore

Tuesday, Dec. 11

- 5:00 p.m. Women’s Basketball at Clark University
- 7:00 p.m. Men’s Basketball vs Roger Williams
Men’s basketball prepares to heat up in Florida

Andrew Pease
Journal Staff

While many Suffolk students head home for winter break, the Suffolk men’s basketball team will take their talents down to Naples, Florida on Dec. 27 for a pair of regular season games.

Bringing 17 players and a few coaches from the heart of Boston down to Florida may have been easy to sell to the team, but it proved to be a difficult task and required lots of fundraising.

The team worked games at Foxborough over the summer, looking for donations from people. They also participated in the Suffolk Athletic Department yearly calendar raffle as well as using a crowdfunding website, “Snap! Raise,” in order to collect donations from friends and family.

Head coach Jeff Juron, who is in his fourth season with the Rams, said that this is the first time he can recall that the team will travel down south to play.

“This is something we’ve discussed for a while, it was a team decision,” said Juron. Last spring I sat down with the returning guys and expressed my desire to go outside the region to play against some teams we otherwise wouldn’t be able to face and they shared that desire with me.”

For junior Thomas Duffy, the team’s trip to Florida is one he has been anticipating since early this year.

Duffy has been remarkable this year for The Rams, posting career highs for himself in almost every single statistical category as well as leading the team in points, steals and assists. But for the teams all time leading scorer under coach Juron, this trip will be a new experience.

“We’ve had one long trip before, seven or eight hours on a bus before, but nothing like this, the farthest I’ve ever been playing basketball was New Jersey back in sophomore year high school,” said Duffy in an interview with The Journal. “We talk about it a lot for Alvirne High School, is particularly excited.”

“It’s going to be a fun time,” said Bonney-Liles in an interview with The Journal. “We talk about it Christmas. They will have a day of practice and then games on back to back days, first against Luther College from Iowa, and then against Wells College from New York.

“For players like Bonney-Liles who played AAU basketball all throughout high school and has traveled often, a trip so far out of state might not be daunting.

For some, the short time back home with friends and family may be disappointing, but for collegiate athletes, it is simply part of the game. “I basically told my parents, ‘You get me for one week, and then I’m off to Florida’,” said Bonney-Liles. “One summer I went to New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Florida all in the span of three weeks.”

The Rams currently hold a 3-4 record and although they have struggled to pull out wins, the team has yet to play a conference game. Their first conference game will be played in January and until then they hope to gain confidence as a team.

“Road trips are when the best team bonds are formed,” said Juron.

Juron and the team look optimistically towards the rest of the season, feeling better each day. They learn more and more collectively feel that their best days are ahead of them.

Help Wanted:
Interested in sports writing?
Contact the sports team by emailing suffolksports@gmail.com.