

# Rhody Rambles: Happenings About Town: Openings, anniversaries and we got our comic on

**Bites by Bre** had a brelightful debut in October. The new eatery sports a cozy but eclectic style, featuring solid, classic furniture, rounded walls and curvy nooks, and the sharp details of its new, full renovation. Those who sampled the culinary tidbits and triumphs presented at The Olive Tap in Wayland Square back in the day will be especially pleased to know that this new location's origin story springs from those Olive Tap evenings, where the food was prepared by Bre Goldsmith. Only now, she is free from the constraint of using olive oil in everything, opening wide new culinary vistas. The new restaurant had a full open house on Friday, November 1 that featured eclectic small bites and kitchen tours. It will be open every Friday, by reservation only, with a pre-fixe menu made to fit those who've booked their seatings in advance. Go to [bitesbybre.com](http://bitesbybre.com) for more info on each week's meal.

**Skye Gallery** opened their first national show with work from around the country to the theme of Redemption. The work explores how society can return from the brink and cope with misdeeds past and present. Heavy with societal commentary, the gallery has included artist talks and spoken word performances (Hello, Mr. Orange!) to augment the art. Featured artist Kamal Al Mansour came in from San Jose for one artist talk. *See story at [motifri.com/redemption](http://motifri.com/redemption)*

**SENE**, the film, music and arts festival, celebrated a recent fundraiser at RI Spirits in Pawtucket, part of the distillery's series toasting — and contributing to — local non-profits. Festivities included raffles and sneak previews of some films anticipated for 2020, when all films are expected to be extra sharp.

**RI Community Radio** celebrated its one-year anniversary, with a full day of original programming, including some by regular *Motif* contributors Rudy Cheeks and Bill Bartholomew. The celebration was at Fortnight Wine Bar where the wine and tunes flowed in harmony.



Photo by Gina Mastrostefano

The biggest recent event in Li'l Rhody (which included the release of comics named Li'l Rhody and Rhode Warrior) was **RI Comic Con**. This year, celebrity panels all took place in the Omni Hotel, and

streamlined scanning in and out plus ever-evolving crowd control seems to have removed many of the worst traffic bottlenecks at past iterations of the event. William Shatner, who managed to break RI Comic Con three years ago, held a Q&A panel that didn't break anything. His entertaining presentation allowed only a few questions, from which he riffed off into descriptions of motorcycle journeys and whale song recordings delivered with impeccable Shatnerian diction. Nichelle Nichols and George Takei extended the *Star Trek* nostalgia trip with their own presentations, and Takei took the opportunity to discuss his new graphic novel and his childhood in internment camps, and to make an exclusive announcement (unless you count his previous announcements on the topic) of support for Pete Buttigieg in pursuing the Democratic presidential nomination.

Chevy Chase (who has amazingly never come closer to a sci-fi, fantasy or superhero film than his little-watched romp with Daryl Hannah as an invisible man back in 1992) headlined the event, along with the pleasantly spry vintage Trekers. Other highlights included panels dedicated to "Stranger Things" (which sold out and was closed to the press) and *Harry Potter* (also sold out and closed to the press). Christina Ricci gave a charming panel Q&A that started with a Wednesday Addams vibe before sliding into Lizzy Borden territory, carried on a wave of New Englandism.

The vendor space continued its tradition of providing sensory overload, with displays stretching 20 feet into the air and in every direction (sensory-safe spaces were available nearby, and accommodations for ADA visitors of all sorts were ubiquitous). Vendors also adorned the time-loop circular mobius strip around the Dunk. Artists' Alley, Tattoo row, the Star Wars photo zone (rigorously managed by multiple R2 units) and a top-floor kids zone all returned intact. Fan and cosplay panels also kept things flowing, and as is the case every year, the greatest highlight of the show was watching the hundreds of cosplayers, from intense to inspired, from humorous to terrifying, from tight to expansive. Harley Quinn and anime inspiration was plentiful, with Aliens and angels weaving in and out of a crowd of Black Widows, Wonder Women, Batmen and Captain Americas (who frequently greeted each other with, "There's America's Ass!").

After three rollicking days, it's clear that Comic Con has found its sustainable mojo and continues to bridge the worlds of geek and pop-culture to create a mainstream-yet-not phenomenon. *Check out [motifri.com/xxx](http://motifri.com/xxx) for photos and videos.*