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The moth that flies like a hummingbird

METRO PAGE 2
Fermentation Festival returns to Somerville

CAMBRIDGE DAY

THE WEEK OF AUGUST 13 – AUGUST 20, 2026

FREE

“Binge Thinking” aims to provide an antidote to doomscrolling

BY BRIANNA EARLE

At the Aeronaut Brewery on a recent night in July, there wasn’t an empty table to be found as people greeted each other by the bar and then settled into chairs after walking carefully by the large projector screen at the center of the room.

The question that drew them: What we can learn from fruit flies.

“[Fruit fly] brains are a really good model for ours. They’re just numerically smaller, the number of neurons,” Sara Wasserman told



Brianna Earle

Sarah Wasserman speaks about her research on decision making and fruit flies at Aeronaut Brewing Company.

the crowd. Wasserman, an associate professor of neuroscience at Wellesley College, was the featured speaker for the pop-lecture series, “Binge Thinking.”

The lecture series, which invites local professors to give talks at Boston and Cambridge area bars, is the brainchild of founder Rory Madigan, who works at a think tank in Cambridge. He wanted to escape “doomscrolling.” “Every day my screen time was over, like, six hours a day,” Madigan said. He had heard some people spent even more time, but for him the real issue was “I just felt like if I wasn’t at work, and I wasn’t sleeping or eating, I was just kind of brain rotting.”

Madigan looked at how other people were experimenting with untraditional nights out, and found examples of people organizing pop-up lectures that brought professors into more casual environments. Boston seemed like the right place to combine learning and libations.

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Reid plan receives praise

By CHLOE TAFT

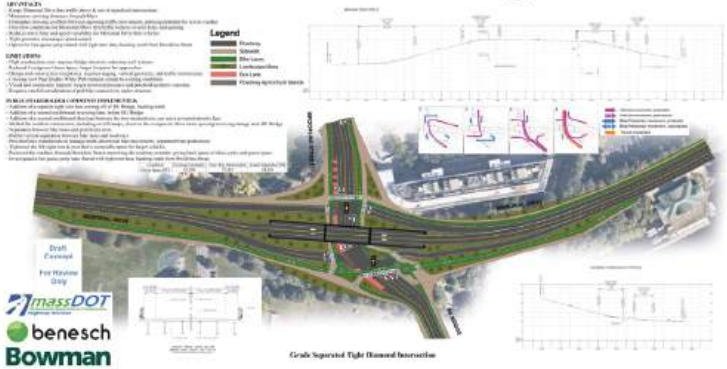
Community members said they were encouraged about the direction of the Reid Overpass redesign presented by Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) at an Aug. 6 meeting in Cambridgeport. MassDOT showed its two finalists for the intersection, where the BU Bridge meets Memorial Drive, connecting Cambridge to Boston. The rotary below the existing overpass often leads to traffic backups that affect Cambridgeport.

“It’s a complex area and there are many priorities that all need to be addressed,” Rebecca Bowie, president of the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association (CNA), said about the redesign via email. “Depending on the day, we might be pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, on the 47 bus, and/or stuck in our homes because of traffic backups.”

She added that people in the neighborhood often talk about their fears of getting to the hospital or being reached by first responders if an emergency happens when the rotary backs traffic into Cambridgeport’s street.

The intersection is a significant one in Cambridge. Over 15,000 cars use the overpass

Tight Diamond Intersection with Bridge



Courtesy of Massachusetts Department of Transportation

A draft concept of the four-way intersection with the overpass.



Michael F. Fitzgerald

Pedestrians crossing the street before the entrance to the Memorial Drive rotary.

everyday, according to city data, and around 15 percent of those drivers are going at least 20 miles per hour over the speed limit.

MassDOT’s proposed options

offer a choice between redesigning and rebuilding the current overpass, which was built in 1940, or removing it entirely. Removing the overpass creates an at-grade

plan with two to three lanes in every direction, entering and exiting the intersection, as well as multiple turning lanes. The second proposal would rebuild the overpass and implement lights and turning lanes to guide traffic underneath. Both plans will remove the existing rotary.

Redesigning the overpass is the preference of Ken Carlson, an advocate from Boston University Bridge Safety Alliance, who said “it is fewer lanes for vulnerable road users to cross, and it keeps the east-west traffic moving.”

The at-grade intersection, he said, would be “just a lot of asphalt, a lot of lanes for pedestrians and cyclists to cross, and it just eats up a lot of space, so most of us pretty much dismissed the at-grade intersection alternative as MassDOT proposed it.”

Cambridge Bike Safety advocate Chris Cassa said the majority of community members at Thursday’s meeting agreed. “People were saying they really were worried about the number of lanes, and they thought that would be so uncomfortable or dangerous for people who have to wait to cross the street or when they’re crossing.”

See REID OVERPASS, page 11

Cambridge biotech leaders debate China’s rise

By ALEX DEGETEREV

Some of the biggest names in biotech debated China’s impact on biotech and what it means for the United States on Aug. 6, in front of an audience that filled the first floor of MIT’s Koch Institute building.

The event, organized by biotech publication Endpoints News, was sparked by a testy back-and-forth on X, formerly Twitter, between Jason Kelly, CEO of former Cambridge biotech Gingko Bioworks, and Peter Kolchinsky, managing partner of Boston-based healthcare investment company RA Capital Management.

Kelly had called out Kolchinsky for “working against US startups and US biotech scientists” after RA Capital invested in a company

that licensed a gene-editing therapy from China. Kolchinsky shot back about “supply chain protectionism” as things spilled over onto LinkedIn, with Kelly baiting Kolchinsky to not “wuss out” and Kolchinsky mocking Kelly for his vocabulary.

The bickering continued in person, leaving MIT Professor Fiona Murray, also on the panel, awkwardly in the middle as the other two teed off.

“Common enemy” or sole foe?

Kolchinsky argued that Chinese and U.S. researchers face a “common enemy” of disease, so avoiding research and development (R&D) ties with China risks putting patients in limbo because of slower processes elsewhere. The U.S. and Europe could move successful R&D back home for



Alex Degterev

Members of the local biotech industry networked on the first floor of MIT’s Koch Institute.

later-stage development and production

Kelly, former chair of the US National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology, countered that allowing drug discovery and early development

jobs to migrate overseas could hollow out the domestic industry, including in major early development hubs like Kendall Square.

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LOCAL PAGE 3

Subterranean substation takes shape in Kendall Square

SCIENCE PAGE 4

Cambridge sixth grader’s powerful idea draws state, national attention

SPORTS PAGE 11

The Guinea Pig Mile race aims for nothing less than a running revolution

Fermentation fans prep for second Somerville festival

By RUTH TAM

Flora Spivak loves fermenting so much that when a swarm of fruit flies invaded her kitchen to feast on her kombucha, she didn't completely quit. She cleared out the wooden barrel it was brewing in and started over. And when mold began growing in the crevices of that barrel, she was still more inclined to describe the process as "cool" before "gross."

Spivak, who lives in Belmont, was first gifted a SCOBY — a symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast that ferments tea — in 2015. She didn't know it at the time, but this starter culture was the building block of kombucha. It needed to be kept at room temperature and to stay alive, it needed to be fed tea.

"It was like a little pet," she said. "It [was] a living thing."

Her experiments with kombucha gave way to other delights. She learned that fermenting is the key to baking sourdough bread, making yogurt and certain types of pickles.

"I hadn't put together that all of these foods were united by this one attribute [of] fermentation," she said.

Fermentation uses microorganisms like yeast and bacteria to break down sugars into acids, gases, or alcohol. Cycles of fermentation can create tanginess, funk, savoryness, or sweetness — new depths of flavors that can't be achieved through cooking.

Eleven years after starting her first kombucha batch, Spivak can now mark her year by what she ferments. In the spring, it's asparagus and rhubarb. In the summer, zucchini and squash. In the fall, she loves to ferment green tomatoes. And although the winter can be a sparse time for fresh vegetables, that's when Spivak makes her sauerkraut and radish kimchi. And don't forget the sourdough bagels and the fermented cream cheese — those are year-round.

Spivak says she loves hosting gatherings where food is the center. Although she had minimal experience running big events, she wanted a local successor to the Boston Fermentation Festival, which ran until 2019, when its organizer moved. So, last September, the Somerville Fermentation Festival at the Somerville Armory was born.

"I have experience throwing food-themed parties and I think of this festival as one big party," she said. "The goal is to have fun and be enriched."

Spivak drew on her experience bartending at the Armory, attending its winter farmer's market and organizing a fermented foods component at a microbiology symposium at Harvard in 2024. Last year, the free, one-day festival featured a main room full of local vendors and a side room with discussions about fermentation.

"I was blown away by how successful it was," she said of last year's debut, which had a long line



Photos: Justin Tuerk

The first Fermentation Festival in 2025 drew more than 2,000 attendees.

out the door of the Armory. "People camped out in the room [for discussions] ... People loved the vendors and the wide varieties of products."

The event was so well-attended, it bordered on chaotic, she said.



Festival goers in 2025 watched and helped with a kimchi-making demonstration.

Sam Lejfer, who lives in Newton, attended last year's festival after he saw a friend post about it on Instagram. Lejfer arrived right

us through their processes and techniques was really special," he said. "I kinda feel like I stumbled into something."

Lejfer is a self-described foodie and fermentation hobbyist. He works at Formaggio Kitchen and

Pemberton Farms, both in Cambridge. At home, he makes his own kombucha, sauerkraut and coconut yogurt.



Craic Sauce's stand at the 2025 festival offered a range of fermented hot and mild sauces, made with seasonal produce.

when the doors opened and sat in on all the speakers' talks that day.

"It was a great education," he said of the panels, which covered everything from Fermentation 101, to starting a business, to condiments.

"Seeing true artisans walking

He said he jumped at the chance to volunteer with this year's festival, on August 16, and is coordinating its speaker series. Of all the talks — which include five panel conversations and two tastings — he is most excited about the sourdough baking summit.

It will be moderated by Andrew Janjigian, who Lejfer described as the "godfather of sourdough" and features "some of the best sourdough makers in the city," including Daisy Chow of Breadboard Bakery in Arlington, Ayham Haddad of Mahalab Bakery in Cambridge, Dana Gilmore at Cambridge School of Culinary Arts, and Jason Bond of the former farm-to-table restaurant Bondir Cambridge.

To mitigate crowds this year, Spivak said she removed the armory's stage to create more vending space, extended the event's hours and decided to charge for the discussions to guarantee interested attendees a place in the room.

Although the organizers think the 2026 lineup is sure to dazzle fermentation fans, there will be events for attendees new to the process.

There will be an outdoor sauerkraut making table, a station with a microscope to check out fermented foods under the lens, an exchange for sharing culture starters, a cookbook swap and a crafting table, as well as live music.

At its core, organizers say that the festival is for people who are simply trying to get back to the basics of food.

"Every culture has traditional fermentation practices," said Spivak. "That knowledge has been lost to us. [Learning about them] is kind of reclaiming that."

"Humans have been making [fermented] foods forever and ever," agreed Lejfer. Fermenting "seems like a part of being a human."

Somerville Fermentation Festival will be at the Somerville Armory, 191 Highland Avenue, on Sunday, August 16, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entry is free, but the speaker series is \$12 per event. Early access tickets are also available for \$35 and include early entry at 10 a.m., entry to the speaker series, and festival merchandise.

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Subterranean substation takes shape in Kendall

By ALEX DEGTEREV

Crews in Kendall Square are putting the finishing touches on the shell that will house what developers say will be the country’s largest underground substation when completed in 2029. The 35,000 square-foot substation will be the centerpiece of the \$1.84 billion Greater Cambridge Energy Program (GCEP) infrastructure project led by the utility company Eversource to increase both the reliability and capacity of the city’s electrical grid.

Showing members of the media around the structure July 22, Eversource officials said the project was intended to support Cambridge’s long-term electrification targets. “The goal [of the GCEP] is to have the capacity for all residents to convert to electric heat pumps, as well as to provide for EV charging and the electrification of commercial development,” said Maija Benjamins, director of strategic planning development at Eversource.

Electric heat pumps provide both heating and cooling through the use of electricity, reducing the environmental impact of non-electrical HVAC units that release carbon into the atmosphere. Benjamins envisioned 2050 as a target horizon for achieving the ambitious electrification goals.

Substations act as buffers between high-voltage electrical sources, like transmission lines from the regional power grid, and the lower-voltage distribution lines that deliver electricity to homes and businesses.

There are currently three active substations in Cambridge, with the Union Square Substation in Somerville also serving parts of central Cambridge. As East Cambridge’s commercial base continues to grow, the new substation will work to feed the increasing electrical demand.

Beyond expanding capacity, Eversource Program Manager Ken Roberts explained that the GCEP will create a far more interconnected system that would allow stations to balance their electrical load and provide flexibility if problems arise at any one station.

The Putnam and Somerville substations, for instance, have both had to add additional transformers in recent years as interim measures to relieve the overburdened East Cambridge substation, but they are both now out of space to add more capacity.

The substation, 105 feet below the surface at its deepest point, will be housed within the shell, already mostly built by real estate-giant BXP. BXP’s Jeff Lowenberg added that the station would also help meet the needs of Kendall Square’s expansive and growing “life science research” community. Already, BXP’s mixed-use project, which sits atop the new substation, includes an AstraZeneca life sciences building that has recently begun welcoming employees. The



Alex Degterev

The lowest level of the substation will have reactors on the left and transformers on the right.

space will eventually also include a public park and a clean-energy residential tower that, at 37 stories tall, is set to be the tallest building in the city.

Eversource will receive the shell from BXP next spring, and the work will transition to bringing online three transformers and connecting them with the city’s grid. A fourth transformer is planned to be introduced around 2040. In practice, one transformer will always be on standby to fulfil needs as required, so the active capacity for the near future will be 180 Mega Volt-Amperes, the measure of apparent electrical power in an electrical system.

That would make it the city’s second largest substation by active capacity, behind only the Putnam station, whose capacity is currently at 211 MVA. A 2025 Eversource report to the city’s Planning Board projected that by 2031, the demand on the Kendall Square Station will be equivalent to 120 MVA of capacity, with a lessened demand on surrounding substations. Robert Simha, vice president of the East Cambridge Planning Team and former director of planning at MIT, said that Cambridge is not a city that “plans on an integrated basis.” This to him is the reason for the new site – a response to years of overburdening the city’s current electrical grid.

Construction has also begun across the city on the duct banks that will house 8.3 miles of new transmission lines being installed to link the Kendall Square substation to surrounding electrical stations in Cambridge, Brighton and Somerville.

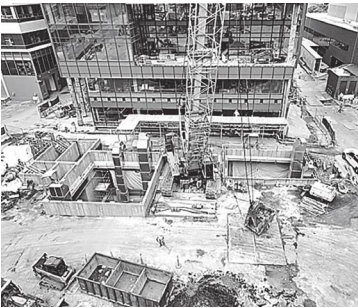
The transmission routes became the project’s main source of contention during the approval process. MIT challenged the preferred alignment near its campus on Vassar Street, arguing that alternative routes would reduce impacts on the university’s operations. The state’s Energy Facilities Siting Board ultimately approved Eversource’s proposed routes.

Roberts said construction on these new lines was “25 to 30 percent complete,” with the Kendall Route — running from the station to the East Cambridge substation — “significantly complete.” Duct

bank work, which has already disrupted several roadways in the city, will run through 2028.

No less of a source of controversy was the originally planned location for the station, above ground in a residential neighborhood at 135 Fulkerson Street and right beside the Kennedy-Longfellow school. BXP proposed the current underground space in response to the controversy, winning approval from the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority and the City for 800,000 square feet of additional space for commercial development in Kendall Square’s mixed development zone.

“The [new] location was a function of the fact that, in desperation, [BXP] bought this property on Fulkerson Street, and that just



Courtesy of Eversource

An above-ground view of the building that will be Cambridge’s tallest, and will include the country’s largest subterranean power station.

started a very hot war with the neighborhood,” said Simha.

Benjamins confirmed that the 135 Fulkerson space will be open in the future to new development, but that it would be held by Eversource to keep its construction materials and tools for its Kendall Square work until it is finished.

While the work excavating the pit was no different than it would be for an underground parking lot, the process of building out the structure was flipped on its head. Instead of digging the space out and building from the bottom up, BXP first installed 120-foot-deep steel columns and steel-reinforced concrete slurry walls into the ground before digging the rest out and adding four “major” floor slabs. This technique was used to mitigate the pressures of the dense urban environment surrounding the buildout.

Maintenance will be a bit more expensive than it would be for an

above ground facility, said Roberts, but to him it was a trade-off for having less of a “visual impact” on the city around the station. While representatives did not have an exact number for how much more it will cost, Roberts pointed to a far more complex HVAC system and an elevator to transport building materials and equipment as examples of additional infrastructure that would not be necessary in above-ground facilities.

A maintenance hatch and two large intake and exhaust air shafts will also be added, with the latter designed to blend into the planned park above the station.

Benjamins said that Cambridge residents served by the new substation in parts of South and East Cambridge will likely see a short-term spike in their electric bills as the station goes operational, though she also stated that the “ultimate goal,” given the additional buildings that will offset the potential rate impact, was to have rates come down in the future. Exact costs will be decided by a regulatory committee once the project has been completed.

Simha has spoken with residents who are starting to sound the alarm over energy bill increases, so he believes the rate increases will both be a short- and long-term problem for residents. “It is going to be a mess here for a very long time.”

John Hawkinson contributed reporting to this article.

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After his battle at Troy, it took
Odysseus 10 years to find his way
back home.

What took him a
decade, we could
do together in a
month, no battles
required



MARKET PULSE

Average sale price of property in
Cambridge and Somerville
10 years ago

CAMBRIDGE		
CONDOS	SINGLES	MULTIS
820K	1.74M	1.42M
SOMERVILLE		
CONDOS	SINGLES	MULTIS
635K	827K	956K

Source: MLS PIN statistics for "Market Pulse"

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Two Generations of Cambridge



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SCIENCE

Cambridge sixth grader harnesses power of motion, is finalist in national competition

By JULIA CARPI

Ahmed Abdelsalam was on a walk when inspiration struck that would ultimately turn him from an ordinary Cambridge sixth grader into a state-recognized scientist. He was thinking about the energy it takes to propel his body throughout a walk, and remembered from science class that energy cannot be created or destroyed (the First Law of Thermodynamics). He asked himself, “If this energy already exists around us, how do we let it go to waste?”

The question sparked seven months of research and development that culminated in him working to develop a technology that captures mechanical energy from motions like walking, wind and waves. He called his project “VERDA” after the Spanish word “verde,” meaning green, a nod to the model’s sustainable application.

Abdelsalam, a sixth grader at Darby Vassal Upper School, said he began exploring the project out of curiosity, teaching himself computer-aided design software, 3D printing, and how to test his prototypes.

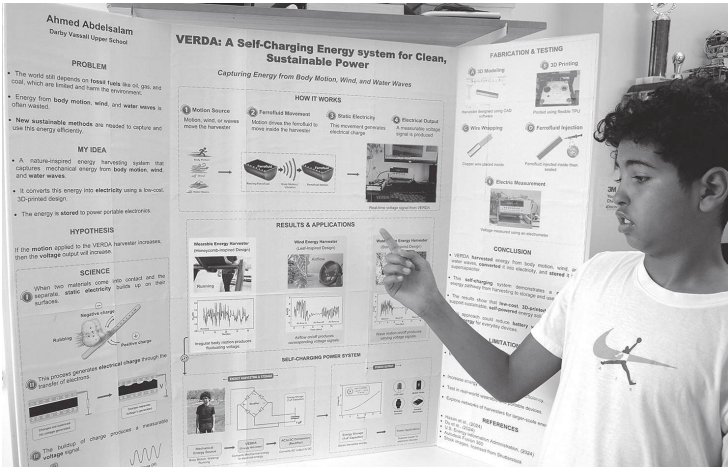
His scientific process involved plenty of trial-and-error. One of his biggest challenges came during the 3D printing process of the prototypes. His device design generates an electrical charge when it moves by using ferrofluid, a fluid containing magnetic particles. That electrical charge can then self-charge the device, making it completely self-powered. The ferrofluids were inserted into the device after it was printed. But the ferrofluid was leaking through micropores in the model.

It took him three months of adjusting the prototype’s dimensions, print speed, and other parameters to eliminate the micropores. Once he resolved that issue, the project was able to move forward.

He made three prototypes, one harnessing energy from the wind, one from water and the third from walking. Abdelsalam then searched for a way to implement his project in a real context. He found 3M’s Young Scientist Challenge and applied for it. Shortly after submitting he learned he was one of 10 finalists in this year’s competition.

“I seriously couldn’t believe it. I actually thought I was dreaming,” he said about the moment he opened the package notifying him that he had been selected.

The Young Scientist Challenge is a partnership between 3M, maker of Post-it Notes, Scotch Tape, and Discovery Education, a K-12 digital learning platform. Now in its 19th year, the challenge pairs each finalist, who are ages 11 to 14, with a 3M scientist as a mentor throughout the sum-



Ryan Abdelsalam

Ahmed Abdelsalam's poster on his self-charging energy project.

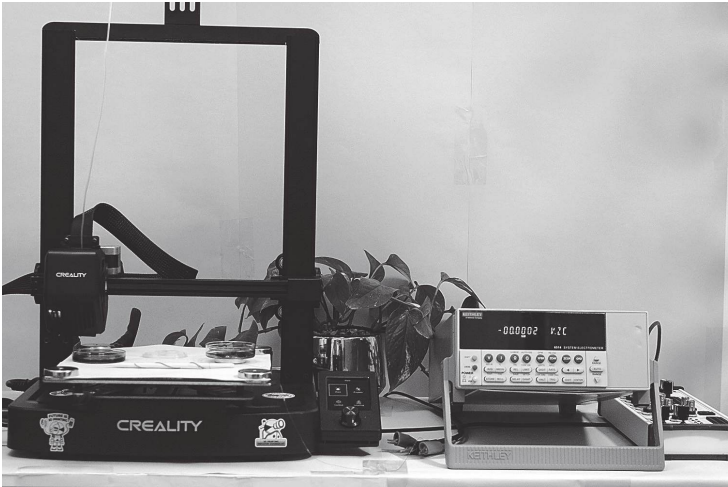
mer. Abdelsalam connects regularly with his mentor over several virtual sessions each month.

“It’s going really great. My mentor has given me a lot of great ideas for my project,” Abdelsalam said.

He sees his project as a window into finding sustainable alternatives to fossil fuel use, which is increasingly important

strate his project in a live interactive competition. Whoever is selected “America’s Top Young Scientist” is awarded \$25,000.

Abdelsalam has already received a Mayor’s Ceremonial Proclamation from Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, and a citation of recognition from Governor Maura Healey. His mother said he’s received something much more



Abdelsalam's 3D printer, which caused some road-blocks when creating his first prototypes.

as climate change worsens, he said. He would like to develop his prototype into a functional model.

In one scenario, “people would have [VERDA] attached to their T-shirts while running,” Abdelsalam said, and might use it to power a fitness wearable. VERDA is not intended to replace other renewable energy sources, but to show how small amounts of mechanical energy can be harvested in day-to-day activities.

The young scientist has a few more months of mentorship ahead before a final event in October, where he will demon-

important. “The project transformed the way he approaches learning,” Abdelsalam’s mother said. “As his parent, watching that transformation has been far more meaningful than any award.”

When he’s not refining his project, Abdelsalam said he will fill his summer with soccer, math and swimming at the beach.

The young scientist is already dreaming up plans for the future.

“I want to continue science. I’d also love to be an engineer because they create. They see a problem, they don’t walk away, they actually fix it,” Abdelsalam said.



A fan blowing air onto a leaf with a prototype attached to it, to demonstrate how energy can be captured from the leaf’s movement.

Biotech

From Page 1

He said he attended a recent event to encourage underprivileged students to enter the biotech industry, but many of the industry representatives boasted about business connections in China. “Where are these kids going to work?” Kelly said. “Our professed strategy for this industry is to offshore this.”

MIT’s Murray landed somewhere between the two, describing China as a “peer adversary” – a designation she has adopted as chair of the NATO Innovation Fund, a €1 billion (\$1.15 billion) venture-capital fund backed by 24 NATO countries, not including the U.S. Still, she rejected a wholesale split between the countries’ biotech sectors. “Should we use the tools of economic statecraft to make sure we have a resilient life sciences sector,” she asked rhetorically, answering, “absolutely.”

“Really good, fast, and cheap”

A 2025 Nature analysis found that the value of deals in which companies paid for the rights to develop and sell drugs originating in China grew from \$5 billion in 2020 to over \$50 billion last year, a jump from 3 to 30 percent of all worldwide value. China also now accounts for close to a third of medical devices and technologies used by healthcare professionals to treat patients.

China’s ascendance in biotech matters to Cambridge and Kendall Square. Cambridge’s life sciences sector is still recovering from a steep post-pandemic downturn as China continues to make waves. A recent lab-market report from the Dallas-based real estate firm Lincoln Property Company put vacancy rates at around 23 percent, up from close to zero in 2022. However, it was the first quarter since 2024 where more lab space was occupied than left vacant, a possible sign of a steady recovery.

Drew Armstrong, executive editor at Endpoints and the evening’s moderator, told Cambridge Day the appeal of Chinese biotech is simple to executives in the industry: it’s “really good, really fast and really cheap.” This has spurred the rise of “ultralight” U.S. biotech companies staffed by skeleton crews of five to 10 employees, with most lab work outsourced to China.

That shift is a natural progression for the industry, said Matthew Glime, CEO of New York healthcare company Roivant Sciences, speaking on a different panel. Despite this, he believes that the lucrative U.S. market means patients here will have access to new drugs no matter where they’re made. He called the prices drugmakers can charge “the single [most important] thing” protecting American patients’ access to medicine. While there is political pressure for price reductions in the market that may lead to price drops, “right now that is what gets us access to medicines fast,” said Glime.



Alex Degterev

Peter Kolchinsky (right) and Jason Kelly (left) argue, as Fiona Murray (center right) interjects.

But Strand Therapeutics CEO Jacob Becraft, who began his biotech career at MIT, said China’s rise has created a “Sputnik moment” for U.S. biotech. Becraft, a Rust Belt baby who grew up in a small town in Central Illinois, exhorted U.S. companies and regulators to rise to the challenge.

“Let’s [expletive] go, we should be able to run clinical trials faster, [they] are a resource,” he said. He noted that 86 percent of non-metropolitan hospitals run no trials at all, making it difficult for patients in rural areas to get access to cutting edge treatment.

Becraft also called recent reports of pediatric deaths in Chinese gene-therapy trials “scary” and “serious.”

“If we’re going to accept clinical trial data from China, the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration] has to hold them to the same sort of inspections standards that are happening here,” Becraft said.

Andrew Baum, senior strategic advisor to Pfizer’s CEO Albert Bourla, believed that the news would bring with it a tightening of regulations in China, saying how Beijing does not want to be seen as “the Wild West of drug development.” An interview with Baum was the final event of the evening. He said China had already established more rules around investigator-initiated trials. He predicted that such regulation would “normalize the playing field” and slow the speed of drug development in China. In May, Pfizer, which has much of its R&D in Cambridge, signed a deal worth close to \$10.5 billion with Chinese biotech Innovent Biologics for the development of eight early-stage cancer medicines and four discovery programs proposed by Pfizer.

While biotech is a huge economic driver for Cambridge and Greater Boston, MassBio spokesperson Ben Bradford, who did not attend Thursday’s event, said close to 80 percent of the trade group’s 1,700 members had no revenue and tiny workforces. These companies depend upon venture funding, which has dropped sharply in Massachusetts since 2021.

Last year, biotech companies headquartered in Massachusetts received \$6.85 billion in venture capital funding, the lowest total since 2019, and nearly half of the sum received in 2021. Bradford attributed this to actors including a pullback from general investors who plowed money into the industry during the pandemic but since have shifted away. Bradford said the fear is that lack of investment in innovative companies will in the long-term mean “Cambridge and Massachusetts will certainly cede jobs to other locations.”

■ Do you know of a business opening or closing in Cambridge or Somerville? Send news to business@cambridgeday.com.

BUSINESS

Froyo lovers don’t mind standing in the BerryLine

By REBECCA GOODMAN

“It’s kind of like the point is waiting in the line,” said Roz Patterson, a customer standing on Arrow Street in the ever fluctuating string of people trailing out of BerryLine’s front door.

“Everybody knows about BerryLine,” customer Hugo Yuan said. “Everyone just talks about it,” added a friend, Kang Xi Yong.

Owner and co-founder Matt Wallace says that people “think because there’s a line, it must be good. And it’s the whole line culture thing.”

The lines and wait times vary by time of day — it could be 5 to 10 minutes in the afternoon, 15 minutes in the evenings, and Yuan said he’s waited half an hour on a weekend. But there’s always a line.

The frozen yogurt shop, which opened in 2007 has always been a successful and beloved Cambridge spot, the business has seen a surge in popularity the last few years due to some viral TikTok videos showing off the delicious and aesthetic product, some with up to hundreds of thousands of views.

Wallace says that customers come into the store all the time saying that they found it through TikTok.

“We have obviously had a bunch of TikTok videos over the last couple of years that have really blown up... which is amazing because it’s completely user-generated, customer-generated stuff I had zero part in,” Wallace said.

Originally named as a play on the Red Line, which rumbled below as they were readying the shop, now BerryLine reflects the throngs of people that flood Arrow Street each afternoon and evening.

“The beauty of having more customers is it allows for flexibility in other areas,” Wallace said. “With the increased business, I’m able to invest a lot more in the employees.”

“Another benefit of being busy is ... we can keep our prices down a bit relative to some other establishments,” Wallace added. BerryLine’s frozen yogurt starts at \$4.24, and goes up to \$5.78 to add one topping and \$6.39 for multiple toppings.

The product

The staff do a lot of prep to meet demand on the products. “There’s like so much that goes into getting the store ready that, you know, customers don’t even see,” Wallace said. “That’s from making the yogurt, cutting the fresh fruit. We have our bakers in, baking the homemade mochi and all the toppings.”

“There’s a lot of baking to do... basically everything we baked the day before is pretty much gone the next day,” said Christina Henley, the baker. Its mochi is a fan favorite. “The mochi is like the best mochi I’ve ever had,” said Kendall Chase, a customer standing in line on their second visit to BerryLine.



Rebecca Goodman

A line takes form down Arrow St. as people wait for frozen yogurt at Berryline, whose name was inspired by the MBTA Red Line running below.

“It is phenomenal frozen yogurt.”

“The mochi is really good,” agreed Bhavini Pandey, adding that she thinks “the flavors are really unique.”

BerryLine’s current flavor rotation offers the always available Original tart flavor, in addition to Lychee and Blueberry Lemon. Past flavors include Ube-Banana, Lavender Honey, and Oreo Peppermint.

Wallace reminds his employees that they are not only selling frozen yogurt, but an experience and an “aesthetically pleasing final product. People like to walk out the door holding their BerryLine that’s covered in fresh fruit and homemade toppings and look at it and go like, ‘wow.’”

“I like to try to make it pretty for people and when I get a compliment, I’m like, ‘yes!’” said Jayi Kirwan, who has been working at BerryLine for about three months.

“Every component about it is a tier above the rest,” said Yuan.

Line it up

Claire O’Leary only had to wait five minutes the first time she visited, and she didn’t mind. “It’s nice to see a local small business doing so well, and having a line at like 3 o’clock is awesome,” O’Leary said.

“I think this place really deserves it,” Pandey said.

Patterson, a local Cambridge high schooler, thinks one benefit of the lines is that they keep people outside and makes “Cambridge feel more alive.”

“I think it’s good for the community. I think it’s like a pretty

pivotal spot for the younger life in Cambridge,” Patterson’s friend Fiona Lipman said.

Looking back and looking forward

Wallace opened the business with his roommate and friend Eric Pok Yang while the pair completed their postdocs at MIT and Harvard respectively. Yang left the business in 2014 to work in biotech in Taiwan.

“We were still students at heart and wanted to create a more student-focused establishment, and so we kind of hit upon the froyo thing,” Wallace said. “Froyo and ice cream was kind of coming into vogue back in 2007 when we started it, and we were the first ones in town, no one else was doing it, and so it just made a lot

of sense.”

The business had other storefronts in the past, on Newbury Street and in the Fenway until 2014, and a Mass. Avenue store that closed in 2021 after being a “casualty of the pandemic,” Wallace said.

Wallace said that closing their other locations “focused all the attention on this one little store.” He believes that has led to the extra success, although if they opened another store, “we could service more customers,” he said.

But, “I’m very hands-on and I like the small locally owned shop feel. And I, you know, I think by having me focus on the one store, it’s really helped the brand,” he said. Wallace bought the neighboring business Faro Cafe in April, which has offered more seating for

BerryLine customers in the evenings. “I think a lot of times customers don’t think that the owners appreciate the little things that they do from the customer side,” Wallace said. “And I really, I do. I appreciate all the positivity that everyone sends our way.”

“I think they need to open more shops,” said Xi Yong.

“We have the same number of people going through the door, whether it’s four people in line or 40 people in line,” Wallace said of the small storefront. “If we had a storefront that was four times bigger with multiple doors, I think that would destroy some of the charm, but we could, you know, service more customers.”

Tavishi Chattopadhyay contributed reporting to this story.

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Sculptures by Marcus W. Clarke at Gallery 263 give an irreverent take on American Christianity

By Claire Ogden September 14, 2025

EVENTS AUG 13 TO AUG 27

Saturday, Aug. 15

Bookstore Romance Day

9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Porter Square Books, 1815
Massachusetts Ave., Porter Square.

10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Lovestruck Books + Cafe, 44 Brattle
St., Harvard Square.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Harvard Book Store, 1256
Massachusetts Ave., Harvard
Square.

Free entry but RSVP. At Porter Square Books, if you purchase any romance novel (adult or young adult), you may enter a raffle to win a romance-themed prize bundle; and you can make romance-themed trading cards and origami hearts.

Lovestruck Books has an all-day bash, including curated goodie bags (with purchase of \$50 or more), a timeline of romance novel history, tastings on the patio, tarot readings, a

romance photo booth, the Love Letter Wall, and go on a blind date with a book.

At the Harvard Book Store, friends, couples and partners are invited to stop in, browse the shelves and purchase a book or books for each other in secret. Then, reunite and reveal each other's book picks and share why you chose that book for them.

Thursday, Aug. 20, 6 to 9 p.m.

Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave.,
Spring Hill.

Somerville Bike Kitchen 11th Anniversary Celebration

\$10. The Somerville Bike Kitchen is a volunteer-run bicycle repair cooperative that provides tools, knowledge and a workspace for community members to repair their own bicycles. Come enjoy an evening of food, music and community to celebrate 11 years of promoting cycling as a safe, green and economical means of transportation.



Friday, Aug. 14, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

MIT Museum, 314 Main St.,
Kendall Square.

Museum Exhibit: Crochet Coral Reef

\$10 to \$20. Centered on the work of Margaret and Christine Wertheim and the Institute For Figuring, the Crochet Coral Reef exhibition presents hand-crocheted explorations of the complex geometries hidden within nature's most delicate sea creatures. Exhibit runs through Feb. 14, 2027.

Tuesday, Aug. 18, 8 p.m.

The Burren, 247 Elm St., Davis Square.

Which Side?: A Protest Music Teach-Out

Donation. Using James Sullivan's book, "Which Side Are You On?: 20th Century American History in 100 Protest Songs" and featuring Croaks, Damon & Naomi, Dom the Composer, Hazel Project, Eric Martin and Emily Marvosh, the audience will consider how music gives voice to resistance, advocacy and change.

Sunday, Aug. 23, 3 p.m.

Longfellow House
and the Washington's
Headquarters National
Historic Site, 105 Brattle
St.,

Longfellow Summer Arts Festival: Owen Mar

Free. Owen Mar studies tap dance at Berklee College of Music. He plays jazz and Latin jazz, both originals and standards, typically with bass, guitar and piano accompaniment. This concert is presented in partnership with the Berklee Summer in the City concert series.

Brattle Theatre, 40 Brattle St.,
Harvard Square.

Saturday, Aug. 15, 3:45 p.m. and
8:30 p.m.

Celebrating Alfred Hitchcock's Birthday Weekend: "Family Plot"

\$13 to \$18. In the 1976 film, "Family Plot," George Lumley (played by Bruce Dern) is an amateur detective working with his girlfriend, the phony psychic Blanche Tyler (Barbara Harris), to track down the long-lost nephew of a wealthy woman. Part of a two-day set of double features honoring the masterful director.

Monday, Aug. 24, 4 and 6:30 p.m.

"Late Fame" screening

\$13 to \$16. In this 2026 film, Willem Dafoe plays forgotten New York poet Ed Saxberger, who has long since retired in favor of a stable job at the post office. He finds himself rediscovered by a small circle of young artists steeped in nostalgia for a time they never knew.

Wednesday, Aug. 19, 7:30 p.m.

The Comedy Studio, 5 John F.
Kennedy St., Harvard Square.

I Hate What You Love: A Music Video Comedy Show

\$19 and 18-plus. Hosted by Ryan Shea, after each comic's performance, they will sit and watch a music video from their childhood and be judged by the audience and host, too.

Monday, Aug. 17, 8 p.m.

Club Passim, 47 Palmer St.,
Harvard Square.

Thunder and Rain perform

\$30. Thunder and Rain is a Nashville-based newgrass band weaving together bluegrass instrumentation with songwriting inspired by pop, country, classic rock and old-time. They released their fourth album, "Storybook Sessions," in October 2024.

Thursday, Aug. 27, 7 p.m.

Harvard Book Store, 1256 Massachusetts Ave.

Ali Barthwell reads from "Reality TV for Snobs: Everything You Need to Know About the Shows You're Too Intellectual to Watch"

Free. Barthwell, an Emmy-winning writer for "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver," breaks down 20 groundbreaking shows from the past 25 years, and in the process reveals why they matter. Joined by E.B. Baretls, author of "Good Grief."

Friday, Aug. 21, 1 p.m.

Harvard Art Museums, 32 Quincy
St., near Harvard Square.

Lightning Gallery Talks: Teen Eyes on the Collections

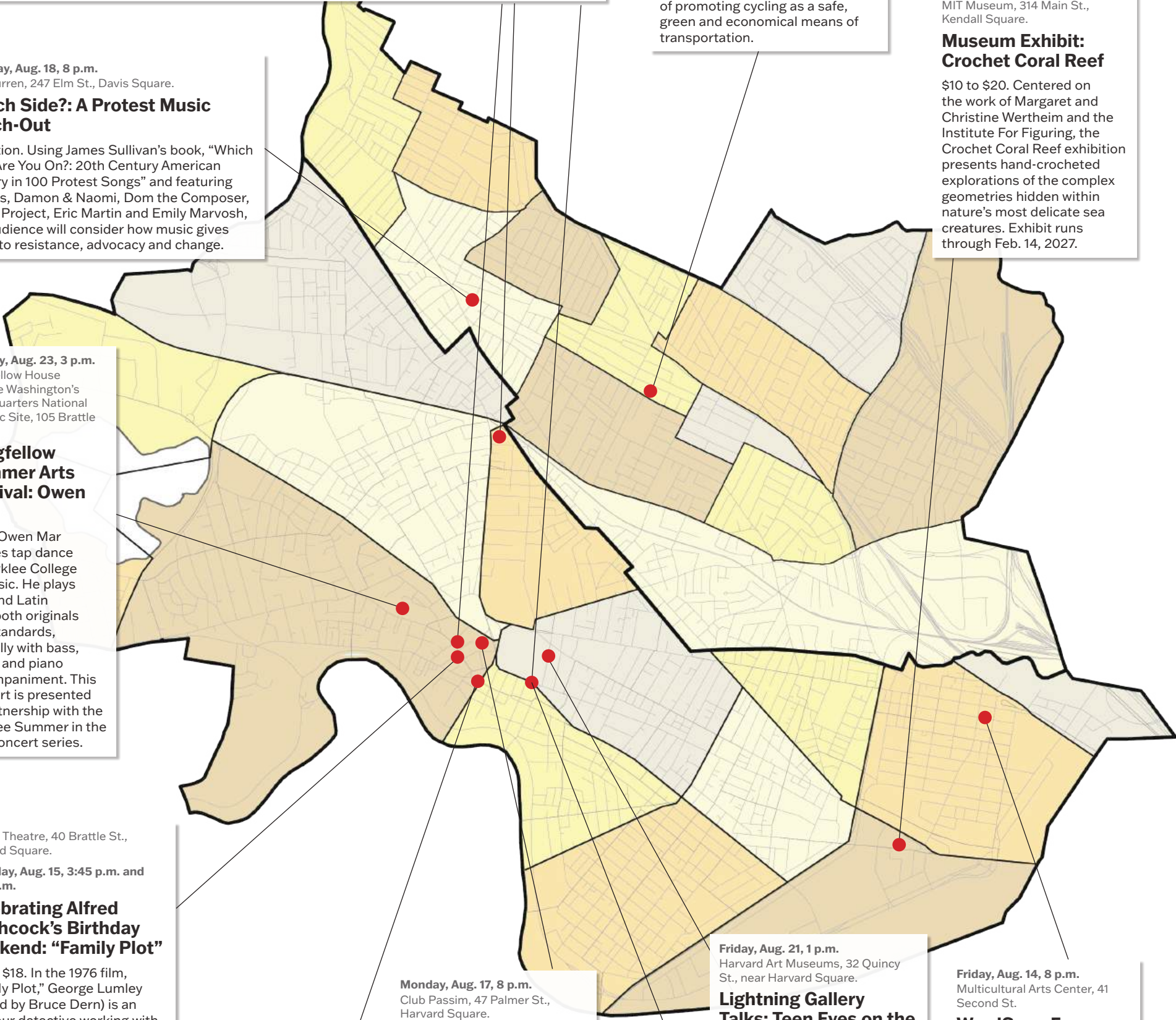
Free. This session is led by this summer's cohort of Hao Family High School interns. Each intern focuses on a single object in the collections that they've selected and researched. A brief question and answer period follows each talk.

Friday, Aug. 14, 8 p.m.

Multicultural Arts Center, 41
Second St.

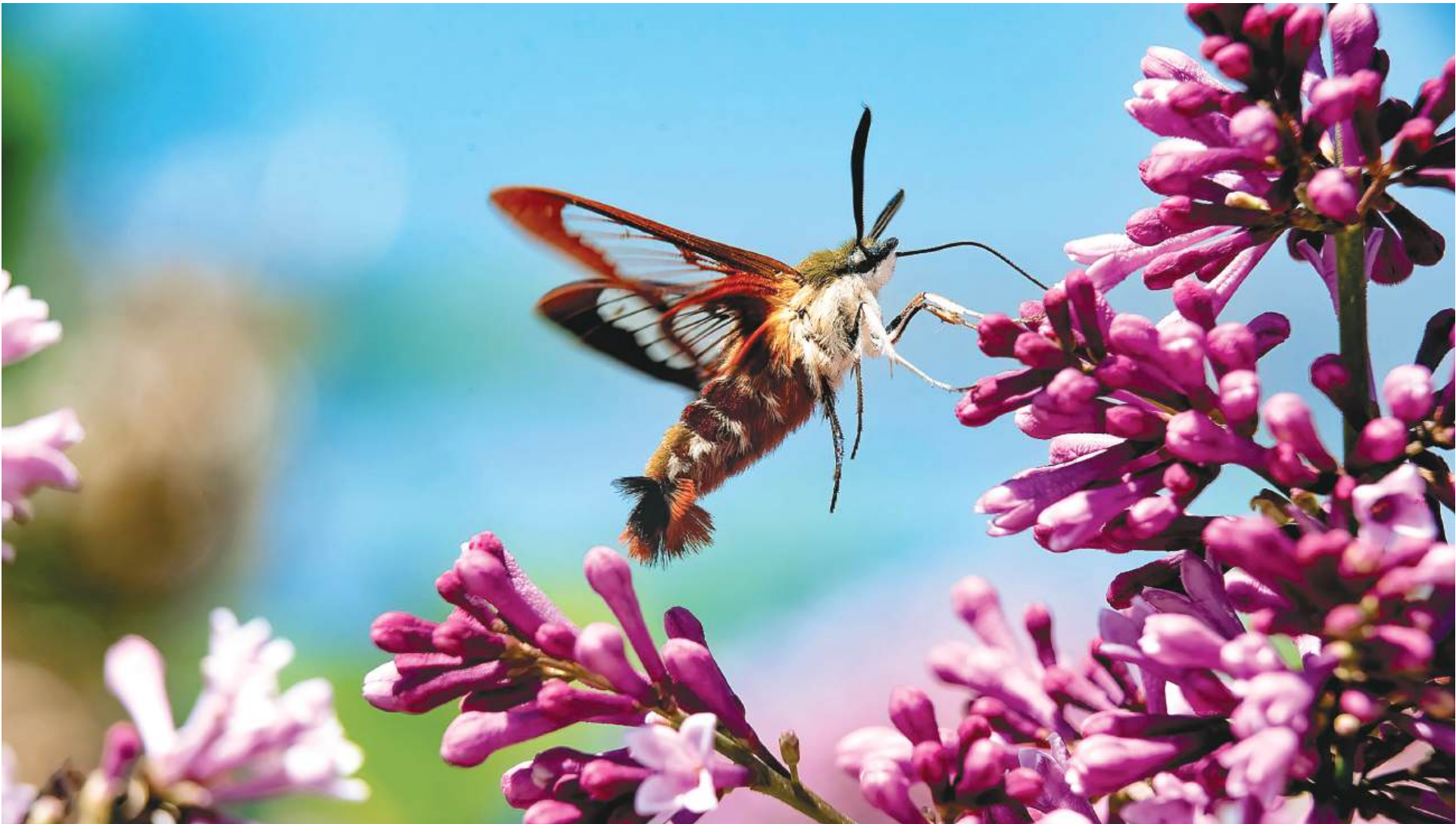
WordSong Forum XVI "Full Fathom Five"

Free, but RSVP. WordSong's Forum XVI features three new musical settings of William Shakespeare's "Full fathom five thy father lies" (from The Tempest) by Boston composers Howard Frazin and Tom Schnauber along with Miami composer Lansing McLoskey. Combining words and music, a poem is read and listeners give their reactions. Then performers play the composers' settings of the poem; and then listeners, composers and performers have an open conversation.



■ Send your high-resolution images of urban wild things with location, date, photographer's name and other useful information for possible use online to photography@cambridgeday.com.

WILD THINGS



A hummingbird clearwing moth uses its long proboscis to sip nectar from a lilac.

Larry Dallaire

The unusual moth that looks like a hummingbird

By JEANINE FARLEY

We all know that moths are common at night, but there are a few species of moths that fly during the day. One of these is the hummingbird clearwing moth (*Hemaris thysbe*).

The name is fitting: This large moth might be mistaken for a hummingbird because it hovers and beats its wings rapidly while unfurling its long tongue (proboscis) to sip nectar from pink and purple flowers, including beebalm (monarda), bluebells, phlox, honeysuckle and verberna. They can fly sideways and backwards, accelerate quickly, and these moths beat their wings about 60 to 70 times per second (!) when hovering — fast enough to produce a buzzing or humming sound that is within the range of human hearing.

It's called a clearwing because parts of its wings are transparent. Its scientific name is also apt: *Hemaris* comes from the Greek word *hemera*, meaning "day," which is appropriate for a moth that prefers sunlight. *Thysbe* comes from Ovid's tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, a precursor to *Romeo and Juliet*, where two lovers end up taking their own lives. Thisbe's



Jeanine Farley

A moth hovers as it sips nectar from a flower.



Tom Murray

Two hummingbird clearwing moths in Chelmsford.

blood-stained cloak is central to the climax, and in 1775, Danish zoologist Johan Christian Fabricius named the species *thysbe* because the moth's reddish wing edges reminded him of that cloak. Like other moths, a hummingbird clearwing emerges from its chrysalis with two-inch wings that are covered in colorful scales. However, during its first flight, many of the scales fall off, leaving transparent membranes, which look like small windows on the wings.

Why might moths have clear wings? Scientists think that clear wings help this moth hide from predators because transparency makes it more difficult to spot. Many water-based critters are transparent for this reason, but this characteristic is less common in land animals. Female moths of this species emit a chemical scent (called a pheromone) from the tip of the abdomen. This scent attracts males. After the two mate, the female lays tiny, round, green eggs

(but no ham) one at a time on the underside of viburnum leaves. Each egg hatches in about a week into a caterpillar with a spike, or horn, on one end. These little caterpillars are eating machines, eating from the underside of leaves, mostly at night, and hiding during the day. Scientists think that feeding at night reduces the risk of being eaten by birds. After about



Tom Murray

Hummingbird clearwing moths have reddish wing edges with clear patches, July 31, 2023.

four weeks, when the caterpillar is done growing, it drops to the ground, spins a cocoon (chrysalis), and pupates hidden in leaves. Pupae spend the winter hidden among leaf litter; adult moths emerge in the spring—one more reason to leave scattered leaves alone until late spring: Clearwing moths may be overwintering in them.

Unlike most moths, hummingbird clearwings do not need to land on flowers to feed. Their ability to hover and extend their proboscis helps them move rapidly from flower to flower. Spending less time in one place, also helps them avoid predation. A bird looking for slow-flying moths to eat makes split-second decisions and may not immediately recognize a hovering clearwing as edible prey.



Tom Murray

Hummingbird clearwing moths have a plump body and a fan-shaped tail.

This brief hesitation gives the moth time to escape.

Hummingbird moths are also important pollinators. Bees and other short- or medium-tongued insects cannot reach the nectar of long-necked flowers such as phlox like clearwings can, so moths are important pollinators of these plants.

At first glance, this insect might look like a hummingbird. A second glance reveals a moth. By the third glance, you realize that you're seeing one of New England's most remarkable pollinators — helping ensure that a wide range of crucial plants can reproduce and proliferate.



Gerry

A hummingbird clearwing caterpillar on a viburnum leaf.

FILM

LOCAL FOCUS



Farley Granger and Robert Walker in "Strangers on a Train."

Happy birthday, Mr. Hitchcock

By OSCAR GOFF

Ask a random person on the street to name five filmmakers and changes are good one of them would be “Alfred Hitchcock.” To celebrate what would be the Master of Suspense’s 127th birthday, the **Brattle Theatre** has lined up a pair of double features. Friday and Saturday celebrate the 50th anniversary of his final film, “**Family Plot**” (1976), and the 75th anniversary of “**Strangers on a Train**” (1951), the delightfully perverse thriller in which tennis star Farley Granger and psychopath Robert Walker agree to “trade murders” to cover their tracks. Sunday brings arguably his crowning achievement, “**Vertigo**” (1958); it’s paired with “**Obsession**” (1976), Brian De Palma’s expertly mounted homage to the master (not to be confused with the recent horror smash of the same name). No matter which of these films you opt to take in, you’re guaranteed to have a... good evening.

On Saturday afternoon, the **Somerville Ciné-Club** returns to the **Somerville Public Library (Central Branch)** for another Americanized edit of a Japanese cult classic. “**Shogun Assassin**” (1980) served as a western introduction to the long running “Lone Wolf and Cub” series, in which an exiled assassin wanders the countryside with his infant son in tow. In addition to dubbing the dialogue into English, the distributors of “Shogun Assassin” actually condensed the first two films of the series (“Sword of Vengeance” and “Baby Cart at the River Styx,” both originally released in 1972), creating an all-killer-no-filler blast of bloody martial arts mayhem. As a bonus, the screening will be preceded by a selection of vintage 8mm digest versions of Japanese creature features, once the only way to own movies for home use but rarely screened in these versions since. As with all Ciné-Club screenings, admission is free, and afterwards attendees are encouraged to stay for conversation.

On Sunday, keyboardist and silent film historian **Jeff Rapsis** returns to the **Somerville Theatre** to play a live, improvised score to a classic, this time “**The Son of the Sheik**” (1926). This was Rudolph Valentino’s final film. Though his career as a leading man lasted barely half a decade and ended a century ago, “Valentino” remains synonymous with screen sex

appeal for a reason. His good looks, which played up his sexual and ethnic ambiguity, were quite unlike anything heretofore seen in American movies, at once making him the subject of rabid adoration and salacious tabloid rumors. “The Son of the Sheik,” a sequel to 1921’s “The Sheik,” finds Valentino at his best. The film’s racial and sexual politics are, from today’s vantage, regrettable at best, but Valentino is magnetic in a surprisingly convincing dual role. The Brattle’s repertory series “**Keep Watching the Skies: Aliens in the 1950s**” continues this week with a pair of double features. Monday brings a pair of Technicolor heavy hitters which epitomize big-budget studio sci-fi: “**Forbidden Planet**” (1956), a space-age riff on Shakespeare’s “The Tempest,” features a pre-comedy Leslie Nielsen and the iconic Robbie the Robot. “**This Island Earth**” (1955), is a Universal epic featuring some of the most gruesome aliens of the decade. Tuesday’s bill, meanwhile, brings together two films which, while less famous, are no less influential: “**The Quatermass Experiment**” (1955), a crucial early hit for the great British horror studio Hammer, and “**It! The Terror from Beyond Space**” (1958), an acknowledged influence on Ridley Scott’s “Alien” (1979). The E.T.s just couldn’t keep out of our airspace in the ‘50s. As we’ll see in this program over the coming weeks, they’re just getting started. On Wednesday, the Brattle’s “**TV Goes to the Movies**” series continues with perhaps its most idiosyncratic selection. Joe Dante’s “**The Howling**” (1981) is rarely included on lists of great journalism movies and is instead quite understandably remembered for Rob Bottin’s groundbreaking werewolf makeup effects. For much of the film’s first half, though, the focus is on crusading TV news anchor Karen White (the great Dee Wallace), whose investigation of a Los Angeles serial killer leads her to a cult-like self-help retreat. Even if you know what you’re getting into, the film’s first werewolf reveal is a jump scare for the ages, coming as it does in the middle of a relatively grounded suspense story. Dante and screenwriter John Sayles are two of Hollywood’s most ingenious genre-benders, and “The Howling” is the film that put both of them on the map.

REVIEWS

In these movies, home is where the hell is



A still from “The End of Oak Street.”

It’s family survival week in a pair of punchy sci-fi thrillers, where death lurks just beyond the mailbox. “The Last House,” on Netflix, finds a Pacific Northwest family sealed inside their house due to mysterious forces at play. Over at the “End of Oak Street,” a big-screen undertaking with Spielberg-ian overtones, dinosaurs move into a tranquil suburb — call it Jurassic Estates. Both movies trap their main characters in a survival hell house, but one of them consigns viewers to audience purgatory and one does not.

“The Last House” undercuts its gifted cast through lazy execution. It seems meant to be a commentary on COVID-19, though Louis Leterrier’s lame mashup is vague about what exactly afflicts this suburban Seattle neighborhood. Rising stars Greta Lee (“Past Lives”) and Wagner Moura (Oscar-nominated in “The Secret Agent”) play a couple with an eight-year-old daughter (Riley Chung) and 12-year-old son (Noah Alexander Sosenowski) who all wake up one morning and can’t exit their house — the doors won’t open and if you smash a window, the glass magically reforms. Worse, there’s no Wi-Fi.

Jason (Moura), Ann (Lee) and the kids communicate with the neighbors across the way via whiteboards and Morse code. Food runs short but inexplicably Jason and Ann use their chimney to trap foxes, ferrets and bunnies. They also build an impromptu greenhouse in the living room. Life inside seems to be quite the familial bonding experience. Then we take a sudden multi-year leap forward. The family has outlived many of its neighbors, the kids are older (now played by Emma Ho and Gabriel Barbosa) and survival for the family has become a constant grind.

They don’t talk much about why and the director doesn’t give us much in the way of clues, either. When the reason finally becomes clear, it’s an implausible groaner. Lee and Moura couldn’t have had the last 30 pages of the script before they signed on, or they would have skipped it.

Life is just as grim for the Platt family, whom we meet in “The End of Oak Street.” Their suburb is near a city in a warmer climate in the early 1980s (Joan Jett and no cellphones). The mother, Denise (a game Ann Hathaway) secretly writes a novel in the basement while dad Greg (Ewan McGregor) pretends to go to work each day, but he’s been laid off and delivers pizzas to make ends meet. Their dog Starbuck is a menace to the neighborhood, digging holes and leaving smelly deposits, until the guy next door (Mel Jacobs) tells Denise he’ll shoot the dog if it does not desist. Denise promptly informs him that if he so much as points a gun at their pooch, she’ll burn his house down.

One morning, the neighbor storms the Platts’ front stoop, points to a six-foot high pile of feces and blames the dog. When the implausibility of the pooch is noted, he blames the Platt’s kids, Audrey (Maisy

Stella) and Brian (Christian Convery). It’s a funny bit, and somehow no one notices the thicket of ancient ferns and palms at the end of the street, or the feathered velociraptors snacking on feline pets.

When those first smaller dinos show up, you half expect some young ingenue to intone, “They’re here,” but there’s no slow build, as the Platt’s neighbors quickly become dino hors d’œuvres. The Platts try to flee in their car but one end of Oak Street has become a prehistoric pond and the other a precipitous Mesozoic mesa, pterodactyls included. They scurry back to the house, board up the windows and figure out their next move.

This movie also suffers from a poppycock rationale, but director David Robert Mitchell, who helmed the equally alluring “It Follows” (2014), orchestrates everything so well it binds you to your seat. “Oak Street” is by far the best dino actioner since Spielberg gave up the camera in the “Jurassic” franchise.

The other big reason “Oak Street” succeeds is Hathaway, who is in her fourth



A still from “The Last House.”

release of the year, after “The Odyssey,” “The Devil Wears Prada 2” (now streaming) and “Mother Mary,” with a fifth, “Verity,” on the way. In “Oak Street” her protective mom is more muted than Linda Hamilton in the “Terminator” films or Sigourney Weaver throughout the “Alien” franchise, but Hathway still anchors this movie. Stella and Convery give notable individual performances and McGregor is fine, but “Oak Street” runs on mom.

The one place “Last House” outdoes “Oak Street” is in the way it uses the flooded basement (another mutual feature of the two movies). But overall, “Oak Street’s” all-in performances, tight editing, top-shelf special effects and plot twists make for a much more desirable neighborhood.

— TOM MEEK

“End of Oak Street” ★★☆☆

Playing at Apple Cinemas Cambridge, AMC Assembly Row 12 and Kendall Square Cinema.

“The Last House” ★★☆☆

Streaming on Netflix

■ Do you know of a restaurant opening or closing in Cambridge or Somerville, or do you have other food news tips? Send them to business@cambridgeday.com.

FOOD

WHAT WE'RE HAVING

The Wonder of (mostly) automated dining



Photos: Tom Meek

Kiosks and a self-service pick-up window make Wonder a mostly self-automated dining experience, with many taking their meals elsewhere to eat.

By TOM MEEK

After the MIT-incubated concept Spyce set up shop in Harvard Square in 2021, I wrote about how an AI bot made my lunch. That automated food-assembly-line processor was then sold to Sweetgreen, and last year, the tech was acquired by the Wonder Group, a culinary empire that has been morphing and growing since its inception in 2018.

The Wonder dining experience is strange and unique. Although Wonder has opened in Belmont, Burlington, and Watertown,

Kendall Square is the company's first foray into the city. (Wonder is well-ensconced in New York City, and has approximately 130 Wonder storefronts across the Northeast.) The concept behind Wonder: a single point of entry to order a variety of gourmet dishes from renowned chefs and eateries around the country with the same quality at every location. It also allows you to get — in one order — chicken nuggets for the kids, BBQ ribs with a side of succotash and a kale and avocado poke bowl with seared ahi for the adults. The menu lists 20-plus vendors,

including Bobby Flay Steak, Di Fara Pizza, Tejas Barbecue and Streetbird chicken, with culinary categories including breakfast, BBQ, Korean, salads, chicken, and more.

You order Wonder digitally, and it's a tad overwhelming — the online portal (app or website) also allows you to order from dozens of other local eateries (Dumpling Daughter and Brookline Lunch, for example). Those meals aren't part of your Wonder order. Wonder has a GrubHub integration, and you're ordering for either pickup or GrubHub delivery. (The

holding company that includes Wonder also owns Blue Apron and GrubHub.)

The Kendall Wonder storefront is a lean, clean waiting room with about a dozen seats. But this is a grab-and-go place, since hardly anyone — just me — ate there. If

phants in collaboration with Wonder.

At Wonder, all these recipes are the same, and the source components are shipped from HQ — central distribution centers not unlike McDonald's or Dunkin' — but gourmet. The Spyce bot makes your meal in the partially open back kitchen. But rest assured that in final prep and food wrapping, humans are involved.

So how was it? Eating alone in that small space, a bustling hive, was a little odd. Given the locale, I would say Wonder Kendall is a concept designed for taking a meal back to your office or picking it up on the way home — although the serene MIT Open Space is a perfect place to eat during these fine-weathered days. This was some of the best packaged and bagged to-go food I have received since Daily Provisions opened in Harvard Square. The hot turkey sando came twice-wrapped: foil to keep it warm and plastic to keep the juices and BBQ sauce from escaping, while the soufflé was well-housed in a small recyclable box.

The meal was impressive: the thin-sliced, brined turkey breast was moist and flavorful with smokey accents, and the bacon, lean, thick and pleasantly pliable (not crisp). With the caramelized onions, tangy barbecue sauce and white cheddar packed in thick, toasted sourdough, it was a sweet and smoky symphony. It's addictive and the soufflé, sublime — is it a dessert, a side dish, or a meal? It doesn't matter. You should employ



The Texas turkey sandwich from Tejas Barbecue, one of the restaurants collaborating with Wonder.



The carrot soufflé from Tejas Barbecue, one of the restaurants in collaboration with Wonder.

you haven't ordered ahead, Wonder has kiosks on site — just as busy, festive, and confusing as the web portal. I had done my research and knew I wanted the Tejas Texas turkey sandwich and a carrot soufflé. The two gentlemen ahead of me took one look at the menu and became instantly confounded, as if caught in a Pokémon video with too many flashing lights. They ordered, with help, but still seemed perplexed.

The Texas turkey sandwich from Tejas Barbecue, one of the restaurants in collaboration with Wonder. The carrot soufflé from Tejas Barbecue, one of the restau-

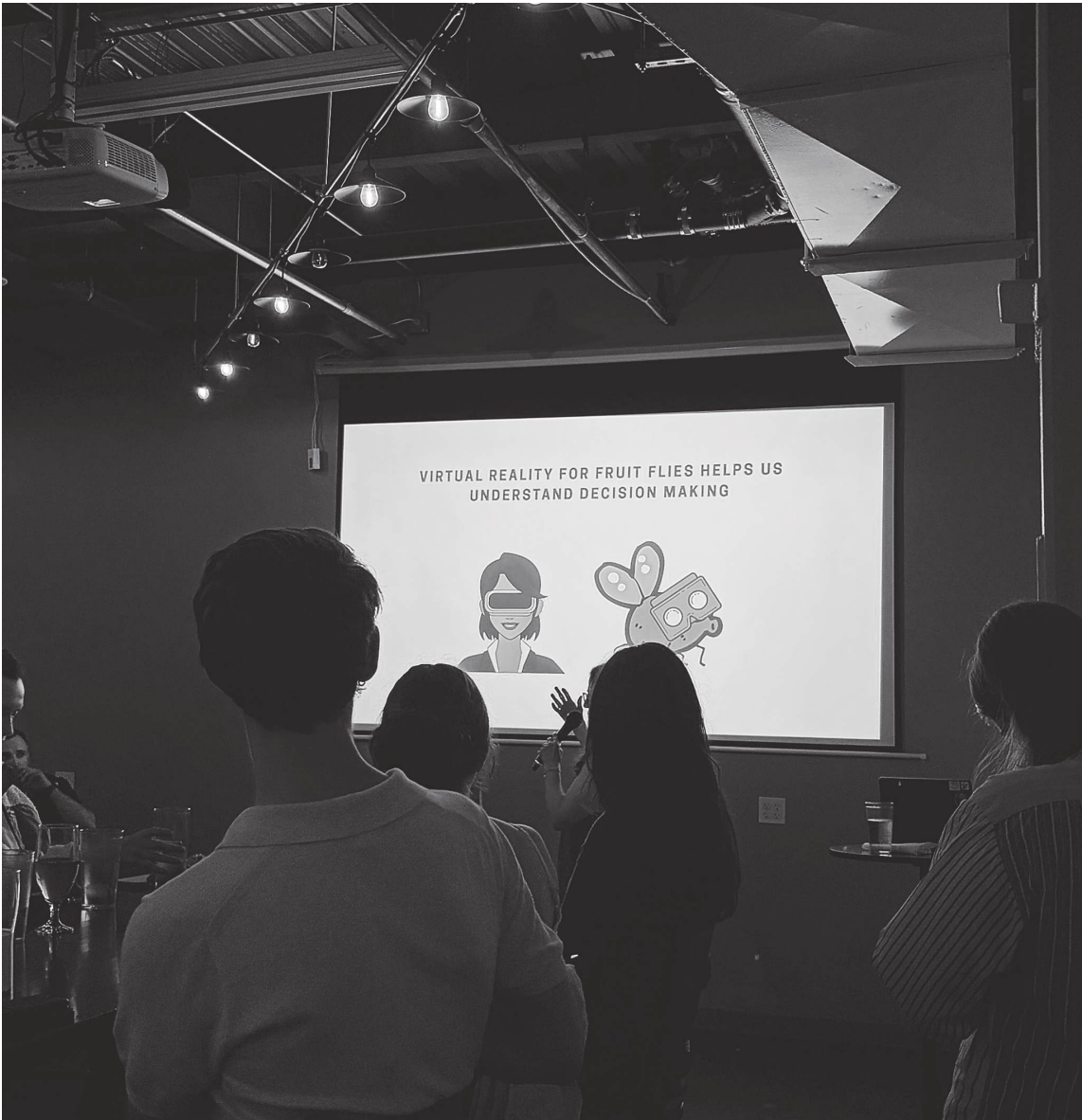
any excuse to have this sweet and savory gem — though it's often sold out.

And yes, I am curious how a Bobby Flay steak filet would come out — tacos, too — but given the quality of my order, I'm not too worried. Come for the novelty, return for the quality.

Wonder
319 Main Street, Cambridge
\$\$ (out of \$\$\$\$)

Have a favorite dish or dine out spot that we've not covered and you think we should? Email Tom at tmeek@cambridgeday.com.

BOOKS & IDEAS



Brianna Earle

Sarah Wasserman presents her research on fruit flies as a good model for understanding the human brain.

Binge

From Page 1

“Boston’s maybe the nerdiest city in the world,” he said. “It has the highest density of universities and I feel like there’s a ton of students and just intellectually

curious people here. There’s probably no better place in the world to start this than Boston.”

Enlisting the help of his father, a statistics professor at Northeastern University, Madigan devised the first of the Binge Thinking lectures in January. However,

Madigan soon realized that there was one major obstacle to creating the series: He had recently moved to Boston and didn’t know many people to spread the word. He went to Reddit’s Cambridge and Somerville pages and posted about his idea. Within a short period

of time he had around 10,000 views and some 50 comments. Madigan was able to build an email network and scheduled the first of the lectures, at Somerville’s Bow Market in January. His father, David Madigan, was the guest professor.

“I didn’t think anyone would even come, to be honest,” Madigan said. Instead, the \$30 tickets sold out, with more than 50 people attending. “Since then, the demand has just been so high. A lot of our events sell out within about 15 minutes to an hour. Every event has sold out, and there’s been wait lists of over 100 people for some of the events.”

In the beginning of the year, he hosted a few lecture events a month. In July he had eight events, and August has six on the schedule.

Madigan thinks of a topic he finds interesting and then looks for a local academic expert.

For July, Madigan thought decision making might work. He found Wasserman, vetted her on Rate My Professor to make sure she went over well with her students, and asked her to talk.

Wasserman said when she got the email from Madigan, “I looked into it a little bit more and it seemed like a really fun opportunity to get to share my research with the broader community.”

Wasserman started by asking the attendees to talk with their tablemates and come up with a definition of decision making that didn’t use words like choice or decide. After a few contributions from the audience, including one guest who was able to pinpoint the Latin root for decision, decider, which means to cut away, Wasser-

man popped a slide on the screen titled “What’s in my bag?”

She said she began putting different things in her purse as her family grew, an example of how her external environment affected the way she made decisions. She then tied it to her fruit fly research, to see how different environments prompt different decisions from the flies. Their process, she said, is effectively the same as ours, just on a smaller scale.

Her lecture followed the Binge Thinking format: about 40 minutes of lecture followed by a 10-20 minute question and answer session. After the lecture is over, guests are also encouraged to chat amongst themselves and with the professor, though few people stayed after this particular event. Speakers usually receive a small gift – Wasserman got a new tote bag and a bottle of wine.

Madigan said the series is currently just a side project for him. However, he did not rule out expanding the event beyond just Boston in the future.

“People seem to really enjoy it, and I do think it’s a great way to meet people and to also get off your phone,” said Madigan. “Initially, I didn’t have any ambitions for it, but now it seems to be taking on a life of its own ... I hosted the first event in New York last week, and it seemed to be very popular. We sold out that event. I’ll probably try to run a few more in New York per month and then we’ll see from there.”

Brianna Earle is reporting this summer for Cambridge Day as part of a partnership with the Brandeis University journalism program.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT

A Public Hearing will be held on **Tuesday September 1, 2026, at 5:00 PM**. The public meeting will be held in-person at Cambridge Housing Authority’s Central Office (362 Green St, Cambridge, MA 02139) and over Zoom. Zoom meeting details will be made available on CHA’s website (www.cambridge-housing.org) a week prior to the meeting date. The Hearing will solicit comments on the FY27 Annual Plan for the Moving To Work Deregulation Demonstration Program.

The draft FY27 Annual Plan will be available online for public review beginning **Friday, August 21, 2026 at 4 pm** on CHA’s website (www.cambridge-housing.org). Hard copies will be available at CHA’s Central Office on **August 24, 2026, by 12:00PM**. Written comments must be submitted by mail or email **by 5 pm, Thursday, September**

24, 2026, to Zach Gordon, Cambridge Housing Authority, 362 Green Street, Cambridge, MA 02139. Telephone (617) 405-5097; Email: zgordon@cambridge-housing.org

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR CHA PROPERTIES

CAMBRIDGE HOUSING AUTHORITY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR CHA PROPERTIES

The Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA), as Owner and Managing Agent for its affiliate properties, is seeking competitive proposals from qualified consultants in providing property and facility management at multiple properties.

The intent of this RFP is to identify and engage an independent and qualified Consultant to provide property and facility management for several properties. Services will include but not be limited to the building in compliance with the various funding requirements and agreement associated with building.

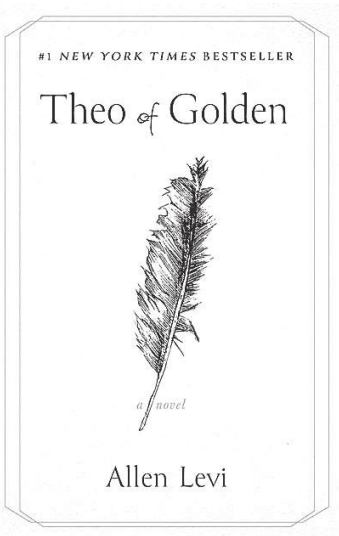
The Request for Proposal for this project will be available on **Wednesday August 12, 2026, after 10am**. Bidders may obtain the RFP Electronically by contacting procurement@cambridge-housing.org .

Proposals will be received ELECTRONICALLY by **02:00 PM on Wednesday, August 26, 2026**. Vendors should e-mail their Qualifications Proposal to **Rocky Ludger, rludger@cambridge-housing.org and Cost Proposal SEPARATELY to Kristen Donnelly, kdonnelly@cambridge-housing.org .**

In the body of each e-mail, vendors should clearly identify the Qualifications Proposal or Cost Proposal with the name of the firm . All proposals received will become the property of the Cambridge Housing Authority and will not be returned to the proposer. Any modification or withdrawal of proposals shall be made in writing and received by the CHA prior to the time and date the proposal is due.

Any questions or requests for further information must be submitted in writing to the attention of Andrew Kerivan, Director of Asset Management, at akerivan@cambridge-housing.org no later than **2:00pm on Wednesday, August 19, 2026**. No inquiry received after the stated deadline will be considered

What Cambridge is reading



Here are this month’s 10 most checked out books at all Cambridge Public Library locations. Thanks to Susannah Borysthen-Tkacz, Senior Librarian, for providing us with the list.

1. “Whistler” – Ann Patchett
2. “Yesteryear” – Caro Claire Burke
3. “The Things We Never Say” – Elizabeth Strout
4. "Strangers: a memoir of marriage" – Belle Burden
5. "The Correspondent" – Virginia Evans
6. "The Keeper" – Tana French
7. "Land" – Maggie O'Farrell
8. “Theo of Golden” – Allen Levi
9. “Heart the Lover” – Lily King
10. "The Last Mandarin" – Louise Penny

■ Send letters to forpublication@cambridgeday.com with the name, address, phone number and relevant affiliations of the writer or writers

SPORTS

Runners of the world, unite!

By ALEX DEGTEREV

The third annual Guinea Pig One Mile race drew 175 runners — though none were actual guinea pigs — to the track at Danehy Park Saturday. The free run was organized by 25-year old Alex Sharp and his friend Ethan Weiner, 24. Sharp said it wasn’t so much a race as a revolution. “Our generation has less exposure to social activities and fun at an affordable price than any other generation in America’s history,” he said. Hence, free entry.

Weiner joked “we don’t talk about the origin,” but he and Sharp offered a few of their motivations. “The whole thing started as an experiment,” said Weiner, with Sharp adding they were concerned about the plight of guinea pigs used in clinical experiments. “We also just think guinea pigs are cool, and they are just one of the cutest animals,” Weiner continued.

Last year, two guinea pigs did make an appearance, brought by locals Gillie and Guy Rosenzweig, who thought it was an actual guinea pig event. One of the guinea pigs, Peanut, has since died.

“He ran his race,” said Weiner, “but we’ll be celebrating him tonight.”

The other pet, Midnight, “was back and better than ever,” Sharp said via email. She watched Gillie run an 8:44 mile and Guy complete the race in 8:26.

Sharp is a Gen Z’er who is a former driver for Sen. Ed Markey and is currently working on a master’s degree in education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He met Weiner, a Boston-based software engineer, while running years ago at the Fells Reservation in Stoneham.

The two were roommates in Somerville when they came up with the idea of a timed mile race. Weiner didn’t think much about it until one day “I received a flyer while on vacation in California from [Alex], and I was like, ‘oh, so we’re doing this.’”

About a dozen people came in 2024, then over 70 in 2025. This year’s relative flood of runners came from some social media virality. An Instagram reel showing the organizers and several volunteers handing out fliers for the event along Somerville’s Community Path on July 23 reached over 150,000 views.

That the race was free drew many of the competitors. Runners often pay \$50 to \$100 or more to run in local 5-kilometer, 10-kilometer and longer races.

One runner at the Guinea Pig Mile was Ash Cuevas. She started running to lose weight, and to make her more physically fit for her job working with kids in Cambridge. But, she said, “I feel like had I seen the price point, then I wouldn’t have gotten into [running].”

Two other runners, Rebecca



Alex Degterev

Ethan Weiner, co-organizer of the Guinea Pig Mile, with one of the guinea pig trophies awarded.

from Cambridge and Carter from Arlington, who declined to give their last names, found out about the race from the organizers’ viral post. They praised the free admission, as well as the low barrier of access which the race offered. Carter, who plays soccer, said it was his first race. “This is



Raili Sharp

Race organizers Alex Sharp (left) and Ethan Weiner, with Midnight the guinea pig (bottom).

me telling myself, ‘go out of your comfort zone and do something you’ve never done before, and push the limits and see what sticks,’” he said.

Sharp, Weiner and their volunteers had to conduct 15 heats, starting at 5:45 until after 8 p.m. Heats were organized by expected times, with the first heat for 8:00 minute miles or slower. Most of the heats took all-comers, but the final two ‘championship’ heats featured an all-female and all-male group of runners. Sharp ran in the 13th combined heat and came in at 4:48, 10 seconds slower than his result the previous year. Weiner came in third for the male’s championship heat at 4:20, more than 10 seconds better than his seventh-place finish last year.

Dozens of volunteers came out to help this year. Sharp and Weiner said that level of involvement means they plan to do it again next year.

This community support was exemplified during the final lap of the night’s final championship lap, when a tent borrowed from the Cambridge Running Club blew onto the track. It took a group effort from attendees to

push it off the track and keep the race going. “The community is stepping up,” yelled Sharp in a video of the moment.

Winners of several of the final heats received small 3d-printed guinea pigs as their trophies, created by one of the many volunteers, Madeline Barowsky. She was one of several volunteers who are members of the Cambridge Running Club, as is Weiner.

This year’s male winner was Paul Neilan, an Olympic marathon hopeful who finished in 4:18. Corinne Yorkman was the winning female runner. She was a collegiate swimmer at the United States Air Force Academy swim; she ran a 5:24 mile.

Yorkman attributed her win to the “positive energy” at the track and “a lot of training.” She recently moved to Cambridge and also heard about the event through Instagram.

Typically, a long-distance runner, Yorkman ran a 50-mile race last week. “So, I was like, I have a mile in me if I can do 50.”

Neilan said he was faster when he ran track at UMass Lowell but was still happy with his time ahead of his participation in the Falmouth Road Race next week.

It was his first time racing in the Guinea Pig Mile. He heard about the event through a coworker at Marathon Sports. “Nowadays it’s all these running influencers and races trying to squeeze every penny and dime out of you, so it’s cool to be somewhere where it is all about the running.”



Reid overpass

From Page 1

But Peter Furth, a professor of engineering at Northeastern, is a fan of the at-grade intersection. “A simple at-grade intersection is feasible. There’s enough space for it. It can handle all the traffic that you have. The pedestrian crossings will be okay, just like they are at any other signalized intersection.”

MassDOT praised for engagement

MassDOT released an initial group of six proposals for the redesign at a Jan. 6 meeting this year, following concern about the condition of the overpass from Cambridgeport residents and city officials.

Furth called the first six designs “highway centric.” Carlson said that at the January meeting, “[MassDOT] proceeded to show four entirely car-centric, very unsafe projects or alternatives for vulnerable road users.”

After hearing feedback on the designs, MassDOT held a workshop for advocates from interested groups, including the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), CNA and local bicycle advocacy groups, on April 13.

Bowie said MassDOT’s approach “feels meaningfully different from other community engagement work that happens after plans are too far along to change, and I appreciate the progress we are seeing.”

Carlson said he hopes MassDOT would make changes more quickly, but “they seem open” to feedback. “We want MassDOT to be open and be forward-thinking and progressive, and get away from the car-centric past.”

Furth warned that “utter confusion” among the agencies in the area around the intersection — MassDOT, DCR, and Cambridge and Boston’s respective transportation departments all are

involved — has created jurisdictional questions.

Bowie hopes that “some of the challenges of the rotary could be mitigated by MassDOT and [Cambridge Department of Transportation] planning together.”

MassDOT did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

After Thursday’s meeting, some questions remain about the proposed plans. Cassa and Carlson, among others, supported reducing the number and width of lanes on the proposed overpass to lower speeds. Furth also said the intersection design, which includes the timing of lights and implementing traffic infrastructure, will be an important part of a safe project.

Cassa said the death of John Corcoran, who was hit by a car while biking in the intersection in 2024, has also increased community-wide concerns about safety. “I think everyone in the room recognized the tragedy of the incident with John Corcoran’s death and really wanted to work toward an intersection that would be safer for everyone walking and biking crossing the street.”

He said he hopes the redesign ensures that “people are going a more reasonable speed for the type of complex dangerous intersection this is.”

“It shouldn’t be like a highway,” Furth said. But he remains confident that “whatever MassDOT comes up with, we’re going to be very happy.”

MassDOT’s website pointed to the next step being selecting the preferred design concept, after which there will be a formal design process that will include more opportunities for public comment and the potential for refining the design.

Chloe Taft is reporting this summer for Cambridge Day as part of a partnership with the Georgetown University journalism program.

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Welcome Patrick!

Patrick John Filer was born at 9:24 p.m. on May 13, 2026, to the surprise of his parents, who hadn’t expected him for another two weeks. Born at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, Patrick weighed 7 pounds 9 ounces and measured 50 cm long. His parents, Michelle Filer and Michael Lee of North Cambridge, are thrilled with their healthy baby boy and share their joy with grandparents Jean and John Filer of Hollis, N.H. and Bill Lee of Savannah, Ga. Patrick’s paternal grandmother Janet Faraci Lee, formerly of Lexington, Ky., is lovingly remembered.

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